



Desert Breeze

Newsletter of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society

March 2022

Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society • In Person and Zoom Program Presentation • Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 7:00pm

Sky Islands Public High School, 6000 East 14th Street, Tucson, Arizona 85711

The Succulents of Southern Namibia

Presented by Steven Brack



Pachypodium namaquanum
along the Orange River.

occasional thunderstorms popping on summer afternoons.

Steven has taken 5 trips to Namibia since 1982 and have been very impressed by the beauty of the country. It is a large country with vast amounts of land with little human influence. The southern desert region can be very harsh with low rainfall, but this is not the whole story. There are many plants and animals that survive and call this area home.

Aloe dichotoma
forest.

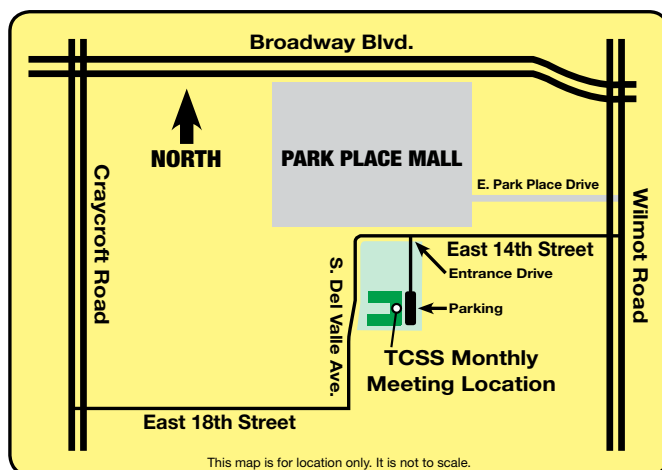


Aloe erinacea on a
high mountain peak.

The program will be a tour of southern Namibia and an introduction to the major succulent families of plants. The diversity of plant life is huge, with tiny to large succulents. The coastal regions are strongly influenced by the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean with a lot of haze in the air, higher humidity, and fog and drizzle in the winter. The eastern side of the country has an intermittent summer monsoon with moisture coming south from Angola and

Steven was interested in horticulture from a very young age. Growing up on a small family dairy farm in Wisconsin he started working in the garden as a lad. This interest in plants caused him to go to the local college library after seeing some cacti at a friend's house. For quite some time his interest was in finding more books on cacti and succulents through library loan. In one of the books, he found that it was possible to join Societies and send away for seeds. Early on he got the raising from seed bug, and eventually decided to move to a desert state, New Mexico, to start a nursery to produce seeds. Once the ball got rolling it just kept on going, he and his wife started Mesa Garden in 1976 and pretty much the rest is history. One of the best parts of the work was taking trips to see plants in nature, and they continue to do this now. In late 2016 they sold Mesa Garden to retire, and now are as busy as ever with plants, growing from seed, and family.

If you have been fully vaccinated for Covid-19 you are welcome to come and join us for this excellent in person presentation (masks will be required by all). This meeting will also be a Zoom program and will be an important educational and informational event you must see. Also, if using Zoom, be sure to log in to win a \$25.00 gift certificate from TCSS or choose a copy of the new 3rd edition of the Field Guide to Cacti & Other Succulents of Arizona. Plant give aways will also be happening at the in person meeting as well. When leaving the live in person meeting, everyone can get a free plant offered to you by the TCSS.



This map is for location only. It is not to scale.

Sky Islands Public High School • 6000 E. 14th St.



President's Message

I am disappointed that we will not be able to hold Sonoran XIII at Hotel Tucson Civic Center. It would have been the 11th time at that facility but it is no longer available to use. Much of the facility is being converted into apartments. We appreciate how well it was adapted to our program and how much the former staff made it a

great venue. The future of the conference will be decided by the Board but your input is important and will be appreciated. You can email me any comments or suggestions.

Earth Day is April 23 and since we picked that day for the conference we will go ahead and have a special day for vendors and other sales at our Amphi site. We hope to gather as many vendors as possible to provide you and the rest of the Tucson community with a great plant and garden related sale. It might also be possible to have a number of drop-in workshops during the sale. All of this will be free to enjoy, learn and support our vendors. Details will be in the next (April) newsletter.

We have 8 home tours being scheduled for March and April. These are always so interesting and great learning experiences. No matter how long you have been involved with the hobby, there is always something new you can learn from other members on how to show off your plants and yards. We will be sending out information a week before each tour. I hope you will have an opportunity to attend.

March is also the month for many of the Botanical Gardens in Arizona to have the Spring Sale. Check them out. You might find that special plant you have been looking for. Boyce Thompson Arboretum in Superior, AZ sale starts March 12, at 8:00am. Tohono Chul has a member sale on March 16, and a Public Sale on March 19 & 20. Check out the other gardens for details on their sales.

Over 1,437 members have renewed or joined so far this year. I hope you will consider renewing ASAP. The cutoff date for current members who have not renewed is March 31. All benefits of membership from last year, will end at that time.

Thank you again for your support.

Dick Wiedhopf, President

Views from the Rocking K Rescue

Sunday, February 20, 2022



Doug Rowsell holds a Peniocereus greggii var. transmontanus (queen of the night) he found during the morning rescue.



Rob Romero stands beside a very large crested Ferocactus wislizenii with two other smaller crested plants nearby. All the plants were within the safe no dig area so, they will be protected.

Acknowledgement Of Contributions

The Names Below Represent The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society Members And Friends Whose Donations Helped Make This Year A Success. We Extend Our Sincere Thanks For Your Support.

Anonymous
 Peter & Pam Askew
 Heidi Blackburn
 Ann Bond
 Page Burkholder
 Jean Butler
 John & Dawn Daniel
 Connie Engard
 Barbara Provus & Fred Wackerie
 Patrick, Liz, Hayden & Averie Gaudet
 John Gilman
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 Megan, Jeremy, Isaac, & Evan Johnson
 Lesli & Linus Keating
 William Lampman
 Robert Levaro
 Junie Hostetler & Nancy Farrier
 Mike Quinn
 Tracey Russo
 Jeff Timan
 Jennifer Topp
 Alan Tower
 Elizabeth & Nancy Vlassis
 Sue Voss
 David Yetman
 Carol Zychowski & Christine Hanson

*(Errors Or Omissions Will Be
 Corrected In The Next Newsletter)*



Wow!!! A series of eight very special TCSS Spring Pop-Up Tours start with the following four in March. A great opportunity for our membership to see how fellow members have created their very own distinctive gardens. Please join us at any or all of these March tours and watch for news of four more in April & May. Enjoy touring these diverse and creative landscapes. Exact addresses for tours will be emailed to members the week before each tour.

Saturday, March 5th - BETTY & ED'S CACTUS AND PERENNIAL GARDEN

Saturday, March 12th - ROB & KAREN'S GARDEN THAT CRAIGSLIST HELP BUILD

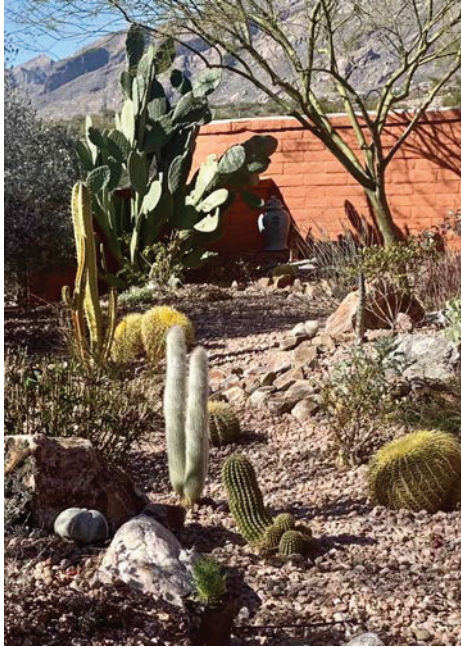
Saturday, March 19th - PETE & JOAN'S GARDEN - THREE LITTLE HOUSES on BIG DESERT LOTS

Saturday, March 26th - PAUL'S DESERT GARDEN - A BALANCING ACT

BETTY & ED'S CACTUS AND PERENNIAL GARDEN

March 5th - Near Grey Mountain Trail & Territory

Almost 5 years ago we were on a TCCS Desert Garden Tour with our brand new garden. We are back again with lots of new developments for you to see what is different now. Our garden is a mixture of specimen plants plus supportive perennials and many potted accents.



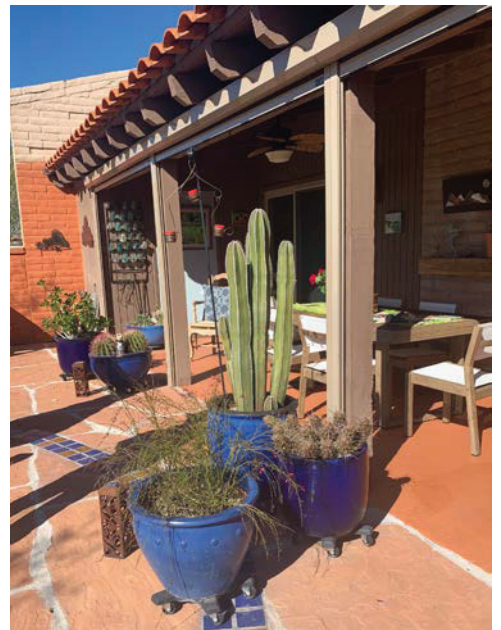
Lots of whimsy too. We are fortunate to have great views to the west, but it is also a very windy and hot spot so plants need to adapt or be gone pretty quick. We have planted seven trees to help compensate for the harsh conditions. If you were here in the beginning I hope you'll enjoy the change.

SOIL MIX: In pots we use Tanks cactus mix. I also amend some Tanks with native soil

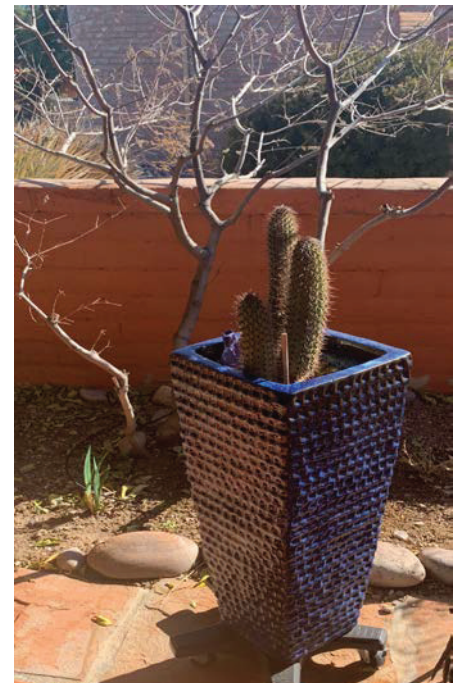
WATERING: by hand once a week except for May thru October when it's on drip 3 days a week for an hour.

PESTS: The only real pests are pack rats and we trap from time to time. We do have rabbits but we live with them. I elevate things they like.

TIPS: We are trial and error after reading and seeking wisdom. Small items I plant in 3 different locations to see what works. Our garden can be an especially hot 115. Most of our pots are on wheels and they move around as per sun.



Partial handicap accessible



ROB & KAREN'S GARDEN THAT CRAIGSLIST HELP BUILD

March 12th - Near 22nd and Swan

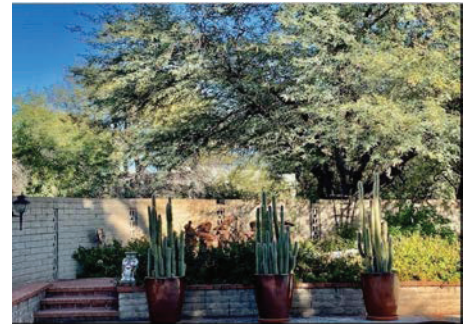
Hidden near a busy Tucson intersection is a special natural desert neighborhood where Rob and Karen went to work to create a lush and diverse landscape. They have been working on the gardens in their 2.25 acre property for the past 5 years. The front area is mostly still native desert with added accent plants.



Their walled back yard's focal points are groupings of huge rose-quartz and chocolate lava boulders showcasing many specimens of cactus and succulents. Serpentine reddish flagstone paths wind through planting beds. The area outside of the sunken garden portion was started about 5 years ago. Aside from a few fruit trees, the entire area was a 4" deep layer of dirty white rocks with black plastic underlay with lots of weeds. It was a massive job to remove. The sunken garden only had bermuda grass until about 18 months ago. They removed that and brought in new soil to make low berms and positioned new boulders found on Craigslist.



They then planted trees and laid flagstone paths. Aside from a few trees and agaves, Rob found all of the other plants on Craigslist. The reason he scoured Craigslist was because they could get affordable mature plants so that this garden, begun less than 2 years ago, would look mature.



They have a wide variety of plants throughout the garden, and many trees to provide filtered shade. A rusted ironwork gazebo, outdoor shower, pergola, wrought iron aviary, goldfish pond, an original 1963 3-lobed swimming pool and art add focal points to their landscape. This is a large landscape project completed in an impressive short time frame.



SOIL: They usually use Palm & Cactus mixed with some native soil

WATER: Cactus about every 3 weeks in winter, weekly in summer



PESTS: The main problems have been with agave snout beetles, running bugs and Texas longhorn beetles. They've had luck with a systemic pesticide once in the spring and by frequent inspecting and removing some pests by hand.

TIPS: If you are energetic and trawl Craigslist, you can create an amazing mature garden quickly for cheap. Specific details on their many projects will be available in handouts the day of the tour.

Limited handicap access



PETE & JOAN'S GARDEN - THREE LITTLE HOUSES on BIG DESERT LOTS

March 19th - Near Fort Lowell & Country Club



We have two small houses in a densely populated Tucson neighborhood. Joan's sister and her husband live next door on another big lot. Between us, we have an acre and a half parcel. We bought our house in 1989 and the house next door (the bunkhouse) in 2000. When we moved into our house, the plants in the yard consisted of a Canary Island palm tree, a couple of Texas rangers and some blooming globe mallow. Fortunately we have next to no caliche in our soil. We started our garden with a 5 gallon native mesquite, and a couple of one gallon jojobas purchased at a Desert Museum plant sale. We also moved in a couple of saguaros early on, a 6 footer and an 8 footer. Unfortunately, one got infected and had to be removed.

Special plants are mostly in the front yard of our house. They include a large senita, one large and several smaller saguaros, a small boojum, several zamia fufuracea, a couple of dioons (edule and spinulosum), and a Nichol's Turks head cactus. We also have a 'Mad Cow' agave. It's a beautiful Greg

Starr hybrid between *Agave bovicornuta* (the cow's horn *agave*) and *Agave colorata*. I'll be really sad when that one blooms! Elsewhere we have a blooming *A. angustifolia* in the front yard at the bunkhouse and a large *Lophocereus schottii* 'Monstrosus' (totem pole).in the backyard.

Joan is an artist. She will have some of her sculptures in the gardens as well as many of her thrift store garden art finds, especially in the clothesline garden and outside the kitchen window.

Over the years we have done large and small rainfall catchment projects. Every summer I am out in the yard after big rains to make sure that the rainfall is guided to the parts of our yard where I need it and into the tanks we had installed by Technicians for Sustainability back when they were in that business. They did a great job. The most unusual tank is a concrete tank that they installed in a tight



space between the carports for our house and the bunkhouse. It's usually used as a septic tank! I have also dug trenches behind an ocotillo fence at our front gate, in the carport at the bunkhouse, and from the down spout at the southwest corner of our house. Many of the trenches that I have dug are shallow and are barely noticeable until it rains.

At our house and at the bunkhouse we have small areas where we grow agaves with an unusual ground cover. At a glance, the ground cover looks like lava or turned over soil but it's really bark from Douglas fir trees that have been taken down near a cabin we own on Mt. Lemmon.



Not handicap accessible

PAUL'S DESERT GARDEN - A BALANCING ACT

(With thanks for Gene's help)

March 26th - Near Sabino Canyon & Cloud Rd



I purchased the home 6 years ago, which is on a one acre lot with a walled-in garden as well as exterior gardens.

The grounds were landscaped like a home in the Northeast. The first year was spent removing lawns and

eastern trees, shrubs and plants. I then began the process of transforming the grounds with water efficient desert plantings.



The lot is located in a mesquite bosque and there are many shaded areas. I added landscape rocks and crushed stone. It is a blend of hardscaped gardens and natural areas.

There are many seating areas and dining areas, as well as a variety of one of a kind metal sculptures and garden art.



I must admit that I don't know the Latin names of the plantings and in the beginning chose the plants through a process of trial and error. As I am very close to the Tanque Verde Wash finding the right blend of cold tolerant plants was initially a challenge. Over time the yard has become a tranquil retreat that I enjoy on my own but also lends itself well to entertaining.



(Limited handicap access)



Update to the range of *Stenocereus thurberi*, (organ pipe cactus) in Arizona.

The range of *Stenocereus thurberi*, (organ pipe cactus) in Arizona has been recognized to be a limited area in and around Organ Pipe National Monument. There is a confirmed report of an isolated plant in Ironwood National Monument. Additionally there may be isolated occurrences of this cacti in the Slate Mts of Maricopa County. The organ pipe cactus is an abundant plant throughout Sonora and southern Baja California, MX. at elevations below 2,700 ft. (800m). SEINet's distribution only includes those plants in the OPNM area.

During permitted cacti surveys on December 15-16 to possibly expand and improve Tribal Road 2 southwest of Vamori I was stunned when I spotted a single growing stem of a young organ pipe (photo 1). There were no homesteads nor any artifacts near the location so it's chance of being a wild and freely growing plant and not introduced seemed likely. A second immature one foot plant was located about 600ft from the first before two large (8 ft) mature plants (photos 2&3) were discovered. All plants were within 1.25 miles of each other and were located within 200 feet of the road. We did no searches beyond the 200 foot designated limit to our survey.

Elevation in the Vamori area is about 2250ft, (685m). This collection of organ pipe cacti is just southeast of the Alvarez Mts. and actually closer to the Baboquivari Mts (25-30 miles to the east) than the Ajo Mts (50-60 miles west) that border OPNM. The site is approximately 15 miles from the US/MX border. I could not locate any data on how close an organ pipe cacti population was in Sonora to the south.

The area described is on Tohono O'odham tribal land and permits are required to travel off road. The two mature plants could be seen from the road. There is a high likelihood that more organ pipe cacti could be growing in this vast area but limits to access has and will continue to constrict any consolidated searches.

This was indeed a pleasant surprise to confirm a significant geographic addition for *Stenocereus thurberi*.

Some of the information in this article is based on the *Stenocereus thurberi* account in TCSS's Field Guide to Cacti and Other Succulents of Arizona.

Thomas Staudt



Instructions To Join The TCSS Zoom Meeting on March 4, 2021

If you have a laptop or other device where you can enter a web site address enter

<https://bit.ly/tcssmm>

Copy this into your browser address line or just click on it.

If this does not work and for all other types of devices see our Zoom Meeting Instructions page on our web site. It is

https://tcss.wildapricot.org/resources/pdf_files/ZoomInstructions.pdf

You can also find a link to it by going to our March Meeting notice information on the web.

If you can not get connected at the last minute, you can email us at **HELP@TucsonCactus.org** and someone will get right back to you.

TCSS BOARD

Officers (ending December 31, 2022)

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Vice President: Vonn Watkins • vp@Tucsoncactus.org

Secretary: Monica Wnuk
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treasurer@Tucsoncactus.org

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(terms expire December 31 of year indicated)

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Research: Doug Rowsell • research@Tucsoncactus.org

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Field Guide Sales: Susan Durham & John Durham

books@tucsoncactus.org

Conservation: Thomas Staudt

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Newsletter Editor: Karen Keller • editor@tucsoncactus.org

Deadline for newsletter text or photos:
Thursday, April 21 by 4:00pm

TCSS Web Page:

www.tucsoncactus.org

Webmaster: Barb Watts • webmaster@Tucsoncactus.org

For general information and questions related to
TCSS, email TCSS@TucsonCactus.org
or call (520) 256-2447 during business hours.

Everyone is Welcome!

Bring your friends, join in the fun and meet
the cactus and succulent community.

1 2 3, 8 6 3

Cacti Rescued - Since 1999

595 Rescues - 46,010 Volunteer Hours (updated 01-01-22)

Please see our Website Calendar for the next
rescued cactus sale. They are scheduled at various
times during the year based on our inventory.

TCSS Club Members receive a 10% discount

We need your "Eyes and Ears" to help us find new Cactus
Rescue sites. Please email us as much information as
you can from new project signs or from other sources to
Site@TucsonCactus.org. Attach a photo of the sign if
you can. Note, we do not remove plants from residences.

March, 2022

Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 7:00pm

The Succulents of Southern Namibia
Presented by Steven Brack

Tuesday, March 8, at 7:00pm

Teleconference Board Meeting

Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 7:00pm

Program title to come

Presented by Ernesto Sandoval

Sonoran Desert Florilegium project

The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society has supported
our Sonoran Desert Florilegium project for the last decade or
so. We have preserved 100s of Botanical Illustrations now
deposited in the Herbarium at the University of Arizona. The
Board of Directors has decided to no longer fund this project
since it is essentially completed.

We are pleased to support the acquisition of illustrations
of commissioned art for the Krutch Garden Florilegium
sponsored by the U of A Campus Arboretum. You may also
want to support this project. Check it out at
<https://arboretum.arizona.edu/joseph-wood-krutch-garden-florilegium#overlay-context=sponsorship>.

**At this time, no
refreshments will be
served at the
January meeting**