

British Cactus & Succulent Society

Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

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Editorial

Now that they've been watered a few times, most of my plants have woken up. Several of the cacti have already produced an initial flush of flowers – Rebutias, Mammillarias and Gymnocalyciums to name a few. Amongst the succulents, it's mainly the Echeverias which have started to flower.

Around Easter time, I did renew some of my Easter cacti since there were some decent plants on sale for a couple of pounds at places like Homebase. As I mentioned in a previous year, these plants do seem to be designed to flower themselves to death in the year they are bought, and it's hard to keep them for very long. Part of the problem is the peat-based compost they are grown in – if you happen to let it dry out too much, I think the plant's roots suffer and it's hard to get them to accept any water afterwards.

Announcements

Today's meeting will be a mini Judge's course. Unfortunately, Kathy Darbon, who was due to run this event for us suffered a stroke last month. She is making a recovery and I am sure everyone from the branch wishes her well. We'll run the event as Kathy would have intended, with 6 classes set up. The audience will be expected to judge these (there's a marking form on the back of the newsletter) and then copy the results to a spare marking sheet (on the front table) which should be handed this to me. After the break, we'll compare the audience's picks with those of a qualified judge.

As Peter Down mentioned at last month's meeting, we are looking for people to join the branch committee and take on the tasks that were handled by Margaret Corina, namely secretary and treasurer. If you are interested in doing either of these – or

finding out what these jobs entail – please have a word with one of the committee.

This coming weekend (9-10th May), we will host a display and sales table at *Hillier's Arboretum* in Ampfield. As before, we are likely to be situated in the Education centre which is opposite the main entrance to the grounds. If you have some spare time, please do come along.

Later on in the month, we will also man a display and sales table at **Whiteley Village's Garden Market** event. This will be during the weekend following the next Bank holiday, i.e. on 30th-31st May. Again, if you're in the area or passing by, please do come along.

Last Month's Meeting

Round and About

Peter Down introduced BCSS Secretary Eddy Harris (from Hornchurch Branch). Eddy mentioned his talk would consist of a collection of slides built up over 20 or so years, featuring some of the society functions and shows he's attended, some of the places he has been to and also some of the plants he's judged and some collections he's visited.

The first event he described was a combined National Show and Convention, held in Manchester at the University of Manchester's Science and Technology (UMIST) department which he attended with his late wife, Doris, in 1987. We saw photos of Gordon Rowley and Keith Mortimer and also Leslie Crowther who was a friend of Keith and who gave an address at the event. We saw a beautiful 18" specimen of *Notocactus leninghausii* which had won first prize, and also his wife's *Copiapoa krainziana* in a 7" pan which also won 1st prize – he mentioned this plant eventually went on to reach 10".

There were some nursery exhibits/displays and we saw one such display by Tom Jenkins – and Eddy mentioned that this was the first time he had ever seen a *Pseudolithos*. He's tried growing these but keeps killing them. We also saw *Ceraria pygmaea*, cristates of *Pachypodium lamerei* and also a *Trichocaulon*. There was a large *Agave* of George

Wheeler's which had been lifted in by 2 men. A plant which was all the rage at the time was *Monadenium rubellum* with a caudex in a 6" pan.

In one of the mesemb classes, his entry of Muiria, Psammophora and Argyroderma had won first prize. He also had entered a Lithops pan and he explained how the pan was actually a discarded aluminium oil drip tray which he got cleaned up and painted - it won a 1st prize on its first outing and also at this show. The pan attracted a lot of attention from visiting speakers and we saw Gerry Barad, (famous for pollinating Asclepiads) and Steve Bract studying the plants in the tray.

Impressive plants included a Cephalopentandra in a 9" pot, *Euphorbia decaryi* in a 10" pan (that was considered sizeable in those days), and a large *Crassula mesembryanthemoides* in a 12" pan owned by the late John Marsden of Bradford. Tom Jenkins' nursery "Jumanery" had put on two displays containing around 30-40 plants each and these had won 1st and 3rd prizes. We also saw a Mesemb Study Group display of around 40 plants, and a display put on by Brookside Nursery. George Wheeler had won the prize for best cactus in show with a 20" *Mammillaria bombycina*, and we also saw a *Dorstenia gigas* which was 30" tall. Other pictures featured the late Keith Grantham, Derek Tribble and the late Sonia Barker-Fricker and husband George, and some ladies from Zone 14 - Ethel Conley and Nellie Blowes from Herne Bay. We also saw John Lavranos, who is now 85 years old and still giving talks.

In 1997, Eddy went to Scotland on holiday. Having previously done a speaking tour which involved travelling from Inverness to Aberdeen, Fife, Edinburgh and Glasgow, he had made some acquaintances who had suggested that June was the best time to visit. He stayed with Margaret and George Grant, near Loch Lomond. The Highlands and Islands Branch had taken on a large glass house ("The Cactus House") in the outskirts of Inverness and he visited this. They had planted out various cacti and succulents, to produce a very impressive landscaped display. We saw many large plants, including *Astrophytum ornatum nudum* and also the normal spined form. We also saw some Koi carp - these were housed in a neighbouring glass house.

From Inverness, they went up towards Wick and went to Dunrobin Castle where they visited the birds of prey collection - he wanted to see the harris hawk which he had sponsored. We also saw a baby tawny owl and a long-eared owl. From there they went on to Glasgow. The branch there holds a show with 108

classes but only employ one judge - it took some 2½ hours to judge! They hold a show on the Saturday and then convert this to a display for the Sunday.

We saw a 24" pan of *Euphorbia decaryi*, a 12" *Euphorbia cylindrifolia* and a nice *Agave utahensis* in a 10" pot. There was the caudiciform *Gerrardanthus macrorhizus*, an 18" tall *Pachycereus pringlei*, and other cerei, including *Espostoa* and *Oreocereus*. *Notocactus uebelmanianus* was in flower and some 5" across, and there was also a 9" high *Thelocactus* flowering in a 6" pot. There was a nice clump of *Matucana*, and also an Easter cactus (*Rhipsalidopsis*) in flower. The *Echeverias* there were beautiful, perhaps due to their long summer days. We also saw a cristate *Mammillaria glassii* in a 7 inch pan. One unusual class called up 6 plants of the same genus in 7" pots, and we saw some superb *Melocactus*, grown by Dr George Thompson. There was also a *Melocactus* in the raffle - but this turned out to be a meticulously decorated cake.

Next we saw Joyce and John Jackson of Waltham Forest - they organise tours/trips to European cactus and succulent nurseries. At de Herdt in Belgium, there was a 9" *Euphorbia suzannae*, a 15" diameter *Agave parryi*, and also a nice *Ferocactus latispinus*. Many of the plants were being sold at silly prices. A variegated *Agave* was much admired. Next, they went to "Anny's Nursery" (Cactus Oase). The owners are country and western fans. At one end of the green house area, the plants are bedded out, and we saw two large *Aloes* - *A. ferox* and *A. plicatilis*, the latter 3 feet across. There was also a white spined *Pilosocereus*, an *Agave* with seed pods and a cristate *Echinocactus grusonii*. Eddy mentioned there was also a nice cat at this nursery, who seemed quite interested in what people had put into their shopping baskets!

Van den Linden is a wholesale nursery and consists of a huge greenhouse full of cacti and succulents. Some people had commented that in this greenhouse you could almost see the curvature of the earth. We saw several shots of plants being grown in large quantities, all too numerous to count. There were grafted gymnos in various body colours and also plants with dried flowers stuck on. The benches were sliding types, allowing more efficient use of space. With so many plants on offer, it was hard to decide how much to buy, but their coach driver had said the luggage took priority and would be loaded first ahead of any plants. There were *Jatrophas* by the yard and an 8 foot tall *Echinocereus*. We saw John Ede and Tom Hughes looking at the display plants. There was also a rather tempting 3 foot pan of *Echinocactus grusonii*.

In May 2003 he went on a speaking tour in the West Country, which covers a wide area, from Plymouth to Penzance. At one of the meetings only 5 people were present, and one of the reasons for absence was the death of a pet rat, which was one of the best excuses to avoid one of his talks that he's heard. We saw shots of Tom Martin's collection. These were nice clean plants, all in good condition. There were large clumps of *Mammillaria* and *Notocactus*, and specimens of *Pachypodium lamerei* and a *Ceropegia*. We also saw an 18" bowl of *Mammillaria bombycina*. Tom claimed to have repotted a 2 foot square plant of *Opuntia clavarioides*, and only have a very small piece came off in the process – this is quite an achievement since normally this plant breaks apart at the slightest touch.

The next collection he went to see was Malcolm Pym's since he was also collecting some pots for his branch. Malcolm had 2 greenhouses and there was quite a slope to the garden so the greenhouses were on higher ground than the house. One of the greenhouses measured an impressive 40ft x 15ft. Eddy mentioned these greenhouses have now been sold to someone else. Malcolm was very interested in *Cerei*, *Ferocacti*, and *Echinocactus*. We saw an example of *Mammillaria leuthyi* - probably grafted – bearing 30 attractive pink/white flowers. This species is a relatively recent discovery.

Eddy also saw some of Ken Scales's plants. Again there were some beautifully grown plants. We saw a 2 foot pan of *Mammillaria compressa* and a close up showing the spination. There was an 18" pan of *M. bombycina*, and a 12" pan of the white-spined *M. geminispina*. *M. carmenae* had formed golden spheres and reached the size of 9", and there was another 15" *M. bombycina*. *M. crucigera* had filled a 5" pot and we also saw the white flowered shaggy body of *M. hahniana*. A two headed *Ariocarpus fissuratus* was probably grafted, and there was also a nice woolly *A. furfuraceus*. We saw *Mammillaria canelensis* and a 12" high *Astrophytum ornatum*.

On Saturday he was judging a show at Penzance for Cornwall branch, and since he was starting off from Plymouth, this required waking up at 4:30 am. Eddy mentioned that David Neville had a sales table at this show. We saw *Dudleya greenei*, owned by Martyn Tidball, growing in a 9 inch bowl. There was also *Gymnocactus horripilus* in a 12" bowl, and *Pachypodium rosulatum* with yellow flowers. There was a *Dioscorea elephantipes* in a 7" pan. Derek Prior mentioned his had just started to come into growth. We also saw the stiff-spined form of *Copiapoa krainziana* in a 15" pan, and a 10" pan of *Rebutia albipilosa*. The plant he gave a 1st to in the

Lobivia group was *Chamaecereus silvestrii* in a 15" pan. The plant was covered in red flowers and it was just perfect, with no signs of damage from red spider. There was a nice *Aloe descoingsii* (Martyn Tidball's) in a 7" pot. *Tephrocactus subterraneus* was growing in a 8" bowl and featured one flower.

In the Show schedule there were two prizes to be awarded at the discretion of the judge – one for the plant which showed the most skilful cultivation, and one for the plant most likely to die in the next 12 months. For the former he chose a *Mammillaria herrerae* – the plant was perfectly grown with no wicking or necking, and the spines were uniform and a perfect white colour. For the latter he chose a *Pseudolithos migiurtinus*.

In September he took part in the Bristol Mesemb show. We saw a group of *Conophytums* from Rick Marshall which won 1st prize. There was also a 2 foot square exhibit of mixed mesembs which had also been prepared by Rick. Eddy had entered three of his *Conophytums* into one of the classes, and we saw these plants - *C. burgeri*, *C. luckhoffii*, and *C. lithopsoides* 'kennedyi'.

We saw a 7" *Glottiphyllum* with yellow flowers from David Porter, a *Haworthia koelmaniorum* from Phil Bedford (of Taunton), and *Haworthia truncata* from Cathy Darbon which had been highly commended. Joyce James from Wiltshire had a 9" x 5" trough also containing a sizeable plant of *H. truncata*. David Lambie had won 1st prize for his *Haworthia emelyae* in a 4" pot. There was a nice *Othonna herrei*, and an *Aloe descoingsii* in a 9" pan from Phil Bedford. *Pachypodium brevicaulis* in a 5½" pot belonged to Angus Buchan.

In October 2003, Eddy visited the Lincoln and York area, including Hull. One collection worth visiting there is Colin Norton's, whose collection is housed in 3 greenhouses, built to his own specification. These greenhouses were around 10 feet high and made from substantial timber. Quite a number of the plants are bedded out. Colin grows *Ferocacti* and *Cerei* amongst other things. He used to do very well at National Shows and had a team of 3-4 people to help him move his plants into place, but unfortunately it's becoming harder to lug the plants around and last year he did not enter the National.

The smallest greenhouse contains mainly *Copiapoa*s and a few *cerei*. We saw *Copiapoa haseltoniana* v. *gigantea* in a 10" pan. Colin buys his plants from ELK in Europe. We also saw *Copiapoa krainziana* and an *Austrocephalocereus estevesii* with beautiful blue stems – this needs some heat. Colin is interested

in other succulents too, and we saw a cristate *Trichocaulon*, about 9" high.

When entering the second greenhouse, a step ladder is needed to see the *Ferocacti* being grown on a high shelf, and these plants were 9-10" high. The third greenhouse has an even bigger ladder. We saw *Ferocactus rectispinus* which had reached 18" and had formed a spiral set of ribs. A grafted *Eriosyce* was 9" across, and just coming into flower. There were a lot of bedded out *Cerei*, and also lots of *Lophophoras* being grown in sections of square plastic guttering. We also saw *Ariocarpus trigonus* featuring a full set of white flowers.

Eddy recounted a story where one of Colin's plants had started to touch the roof of the greenhouse. Colin decided to cut the stem and got his wife to help with the block and tackle to lift the cut piece – however, it was so heavy that it lifted his wife into the air! As it happens, the cut plant re-grew to the full height in just 3 more years.

Eddy mentioned that he took part in the Lea Valley Show, which is held at Capel Manor in North Enfield, near the A10. We saw a plant of *Euphorbia lactea*, 18" tall owned by the late Jim Board which had gained an award of merit. *Ferocactus stansii* had bright red spines, and there was a nice multi-headed *Astrophytum ornatum* in a 10" pan. *Agave proliferata* was also in a 10" pan. *Tephrocactus subterraneus* had pink flowers and was in a 7" pot. *Pachypodium rosulatum* featured yellow flowers, and another of Jim's plants was a 9" high *Euphorbia neohumbertii*. *Pseudolithos migiurtinus* was 4" high. We saw some of Eddy's haworthias - *H. cv. 'Silver Wedding'* and *H. cv. 'Yomedomo'* and two more which had been obtained in South Africa – *H. cooperi venusta* and *H. pygmaea argento-maculosa*. We also saw his *Fenestraria aurantiaca* filling a 12" pan.

This was 2004, and in the following month, he went to judge Portsmouth Branch's show. He judged the cacti with John Ede, and John Watmough judged the succulents. There was a plant of *Epithelantha micromeris* growing in a 6" pan and it was perfect. There was an *Espostoa* in a 6 inch pot, a 6" cristate *Euphorbia* and a woolly *Tephrocactus geometricans*. There was a nice *Mammillaria theresae* entered into one of the "2 mamms in 6" pots" class and a respectable *Homalocephala texensis* in a 10" pan. Next was a 8½" *Gymnocalycium* which Ivor recognised as one of his plants. One of the classes required 6 plants of different genera and Eddy pointed out despite the entry containing excellent plants, it was considered "not-as-scheduled" because

it had included 2 *Mammillarias*. We saw *Agave utahensis* and also a plant he considered very desirable - *Adenia goetzei* in a 6-7" pan. Eddy said this was a pig to grow and it needs high temperatures.

The last few slides were to illustrate what you could do without a greenhouse if you lived in the right place. In 2004, he was travelling in South Africa with John Ede. They were staying at the Obesa Lodge in Graaff-Reinet and they realised there was cactus garden nearby, with plants growing out in the open. They went there and saw a large number of cacti and succulent plants many of which were in excellent condition. There were *Cerei*, *Agaves*, *Cyphostemas* and a *Morawetzia* 4 feet tall with magenta flowers. A spiny *cereus* had a light pink flower, 3" across. Some of the *cerei* were forming side-cephaliums. We saw John Ede standing next to one of the plants to give an idea of the scale – this plant must have been 10 feet tall. We also saw a nice *Agave potatorum*. In one area there were hundreds of *Ferocacti* planted out in row, each around a foot high, and with attractive red spines.

Overall this was an interesting talk which will have brought back some memories for members who had seen or met some of the featured people in real life.

Vinay Shah

Table Show Results

There were 12 entries in the table show at the 3rd March meeting.

	Cacti – Neopterteria & Copipoa Group	Succulents – Adromischus Group
Open	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Copiapoa longistaminea</i>	(1) J Roskilly <i>Adromischus cooperi</i>
	(2) -	(2) B Beckerleg <i>Crassula tecta</i>
	(3) -	(3) J Roskilly <i>Adromischus halesowensis</i>
Intermediate	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Neopterteria villosa</i>	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Crassula suzannae</i>
	(2) B Beckerleg <i>Copiapoa cinerea</i>	(2) J Roskilly <i>Adromischus nanus</i>
	(3) J Roskilly <i>Neopterteria occulta</i>	(3) J Burnay <i>Adromischus festivus</i>

Ivor Biddlecombe

There were 11 entries in the table show at the 31st March meeting.

	Cacti – Echinocactus Group	Succulents – Agave Group
Open	(1) J Roskilly Echinocactus grusonii	(1) B Beckerleg Agave victoria-reginae
	(2) B Beckerleg Echinocactus grusonii	(2) T Grech Agave sp.
	(3) T Grech Echinocactus grusonii	(3) -
Intermediate	(1) B Beckerleg Ferocactus macrodiscus	(1) B Beckerleg Agave titanota
	(2) -	(2) T Grech Agave sp.
	(3) -	(3) T Grech Agave toumeyana v. bella

Ivor Biddlecombe

Next Month's Meeting

The next meeting will be held on June 2nd and will feature Kathy and Keith Flanagan, who will be talking about plants from their collection.

The June table show will consist of the Parodia group (cacti) and the Crassula group (succulents). Please note that you can submit more than one entry in any of the classes.

The Parodia group contains *Parodia*, *Brasilicactus*, *Brasiliparodia*, *Eriocactus*, *Malacocarpus*, *Notocactus*, and *Wigginsia*.

The Crassula group is large and contains several subgroups (Adromischus, Aeonium, Echeveria, Sedum and Semperivium). Hence it includes many genera, such as *Adromischus*, *Bryophyllum*, *Cotyledon*, *Crassula*, *Kalanchoe*, *Rochea*, *Tylecodon*, *Aeonium*, *Greenovia* and *Monanthes*, *Echeveria*, *Dudleya*, *Graptopetalum*, *Pachyphytum*, *Tacitus*, *Sedum*, *Sempervivum* and *Jovibarba*.

A committee meeting will be scheduled for May – time and venue still to be decided.

Forthcoming Events

Sat	9 th	May-	Ampfield	Display / Plant Sales @ Hilliers Arboretum, Ampfield
Sun	10 th	May		
Fri	15 th	May	Isle of Wight	Cacti of Ecuador (John Hughes)
Sat	16 th	May	Portsmouth	Succulents around Vanrhynsdorp (Derek Tribble)
Sat	30 th	May-	Whiteley	Display / Plant Sales @ Village Garden Market, Whiteley (M27 J9)
Sun	31 st	May		
Tue	2 nd	Jun	Southampton	Plants from our Collection (Kathy & Keith Flanagan)
Sat	6 th	Jun	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Summer Show @ Wickham Community Hall, Wickham
Fri	19 th	Jun	Isle of Wight	What I Did Last Winter 2 (Paul Klaassen)
Sat	20 th	Jun	Portsmouth	Seed Raising (Ian Woolnough)
Tue	7 th	Jul	Southampton	The Genus Echeveria (John Pilbeam)

Branch website: <http://www.southampton.bcsc.org.uk>

Branch Mini Judge's Course – Instructions

- ✍️ Examine the entries and decide which plants you think should be 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each class. Each entry will have a letter (A, B, C, etc.) placed next to it. Record this letter in the white sections of the results table below. The grey sections can be used to record the Judge's selections.
- ✍️ Also record any entries which are NAS (not as scheduled) – usually pots which are too large, a genus entered in the wrong class, or the wrong number of plants.
- ✍️ When you have finished judging all 6 classes, copy your results to a marking sheet (available from the front table), fill in your name and hand the copy to Vinay Shah. The results will be compared with the Judge's selections and will also be collated to determine the audience's overall favourite choices.

Class			1 st	2 nd	3 rd	NAS
1	Mammillaria Group 2 plants in pots not exceeding 5½ "	Your choice				
		Judge's choice				
2	Strombocactus or Pediocactus Group 1 plant, max. pot size 5½"	Your choice				
		Judge's choice				
3	Any cactus 2 plants (different genera), max. pot size 5½"	Your choice				
		Judge's choice				
4	Crassula Group Adromischus sub-group 2 plants, max pot size 5"	Your choice				
		Judge's choice				
5	Haworthia 3 plants, max pot size 3½"	Your choice				
		Judge's choice				
6	Any succulent 2 plants (different genera), max pot size 5½"	Your choice				
		Judge's choice				

Scoring: (for each class)

- ✍️ One point will be awarded if an entry which you placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd is also placed (within any position) in the top 3 by the Judge.
- ✍️ A bonus point will be awarded if your selection for 1st place matches the Judge's choice for 1st
- ✍️ A bonus point will be awarded for every NAS* plant which you correctly identify.
- ✍️ A point will be deducted if you place a NAS* entry in the top 3, or if you incorrectly mark an eligible entry as NAS*.

* NAS - Not As Scheduled – an entry which does not comply with the class description.