

# British Cactus & Succulent Society

## Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

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### Editorial

Recent reports indicate that June this year was the wettest for over a century. Certainly days of sunshine have been few and far between and this has restricted flowering on many types of plants, including some of my cacti and succulents. Nevertheless, most of the species that would be expected to flower in May and June have done so.

### Announcements

A reminder that the **BCSS National Show** is only a few weeks away. Our friends from Portsmouth Branch have offered a free coach ride to and from the show on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August. If you are interested in taking up this generous offer, please get in touch with me or David Neville and we will put you in touch with Portsmouth Branch's secretary, Victoria Burton.

Towards the end of this month, the branch will be taking part in the **New Forest Show**. This is a three day show which is held in the middle of the week, and arrangements for manning our display were discussed at a recent committee meeting. Contact David Neville for further details.

The library now has a copy of the new John Pilbeam book on **Echinocereus**.

David has received some raffle tickets to allow members to support the BCSS National Show.

The **annual branch dinner** will be held on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> August, and the venue will most likely be the Luzborough Inn, near Romsey. So that we have an

idea of numbers, please let David know if you would like to attend.

### Last Month's Meeting

At the start of the meeting, Geoff mentioned that Peter Down had a few words to say. This sounded ominous but Peter just wanted to remind the members about the fact that the Queen was celebrating her 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the monarch and that the weekend of events we had seen will never happen again. Some drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) were distributed amongst the members and Peter made a toast "Long may she reign and God bless her."

### What I Saw Last Winter

Paul Klaassen started off his talk by mentioning that the first half would cover a trip last winter to Bolivia (with John Carr and others). The second half of the talk would deviate from the title, and would actually cover a trip to the Colorado Plateau in April this year.

He also gave us a quick summary of the Bolivia trip. Would he go again? In principle, yes, but the whole trip was disrupted by blockades. Even his flight out was impacted and the consequent re-routing meant he arrived a day later than expected. The truckers in Bolivia were on strike because the government not only wanted trucks to pay for MOTs, but they also wanted the trucks to be tested! In one place where they had stopped, the villagers claimed they had trespassed and with stones in their hands, stopped them from leaving. The situation changed from day to day and one really had to rely on the local grapevine. He was accompanied by Brian Bates and John Carr - and the taxonomy used in the talk were their names, although he had looked them up in the new Cactus Lexicon and so would also show us names we might recognise more readily. Also in the party were Wiebe Bosma, Lucy and Brendan Burke and Chris Pugh.

Bolivia is one of the few countries in South America which is land-locked. At the local hotel we saw Wiebe taking a picture of a cactus which the locals said came from the mountains - it was a "monkey

tail” - *Cleistocactus winteri* ssp. *colodemono*. Epiphytic cacti abound and we saw a couple if examples of *Rhipsalis*. *Cleistocactus candelilla* had colourful pink flowers. A *hylocereus* in a tree was not an endemic plant. *Castellanosia caineana* was a columnar cactus which formed tall shrubs over 20 feet high – but the stems were rather tatty. A gymnocalycium with a short flower tube and pink flowers was *G. pflanzii*. *Persekia sacharosa* had beautiful pink flowers. Although it does not look at all like a cactus, it does have spines and areoles, and has semi succulent leaves.

On the second day, they left Comarapa to head for Cochabamba. They found *Echeverias* – 6-7 species are supposed to occur in Bolivia. He had sent pictures to John Pilbeam and Myron Kimmach but they were unsure and had requested actual plant samples. *Echinopsis* is quite a common plant, and although the bodies were tatty, the flowers of *E. obrepanda* were very nice. The first *Sulcorebutia* they encountered was *S. tiraquensis* “*totorensis*”. This is where he realised there was a problem with his Nikon camera - the red pigmentation of the flowers was so intense it was affecting the camera and making it over-saturate everything. It was difficult to detect this issue when taking the pictures. They also found the variant *bicolorispina* which had light and dark spines. A bromeliad of some sort had a pink and dark blue inflorescence. We then saw one of the blockades and John Carr negotiating with the natives. After making the excuse that they were ignorant foreigners, they were eventually let out.

*Corryocactus* is rarely seen in cultivation and *C. melanotrichus* had red flowers. We saw Wiebe climbing up a hill where they found *Parodia schwebsiana* in flower. At Gertel’s Island, an outcrop surrounded by water, they found *Sulcorebutia tiraquensis longisetus*. It is incredibly variable. They also came across *Sulcorebutia steinbachii oenantha*. *Quiabentia veticillantha* used to be classified as a *Pereskia* but it is now considered a separate species. It had nice pink flowers.

In Epizana, the “Hotel Hilton” proved not to be part of the famous chain, with much wildlife to be found on the floors! They eventually went to another town. From Sucre to Camarago, Google showed a route of 800km, but John knew of a new route which was just 150km. They found *Blossfeldia*, which seemed to like growing in slate, in the moist humid conditions on the side of rivers. A *Weingartia neocummingii* ssp. *lanata platygona* was in good condition. In more typical open landscape. *Echinopsis cinnabarina* had red flowers and *Cumulopuntia rossianus* had flowers in shades of

pink, orange and yellow. Although it was November, this is the beginning of their summer and also the start of the rainy seasons with thunderstorms raging on the hills. Fortunately they stayed dry most of the time. They stopped at a location which reminded him of the Yavia location in South America. The tiny plants found here were *Cintia knizei* (*Rebutia cintia*). At the River Honda, they crossed a bridge and saw people standing on something orange – this turned out to be people washing carrots in the river. *Weingartia fidaiana* had yellow flowers. He spotted a *Trichocereus* across the bridge in flower and this was *T. tarijensis* with incredible pink flowers. There was some variability amongst the plants, but the flowers were stunning. It was again quite a challenge for the cameras, and the Canon seemed to do better than the Nikons here.

They started seeing some *Parodias*. *Weingartia neumanniana* has a big taproot, and has chins under tubercles. They stayed a few days in Camargo and made a few side trips. At the River Cinti, they found the orange flowered and golden spined *Parodia ritteri camargensis*. There were also nice puyas here, some were 6 feet tall and featured impressive trunks. An opuntia was identified as *Cumulopuntia chichensis* – in Chile something very similar is called *Cumulopuntia boliviana*. A girl carrying packs on donkeys was actually the local postal service. *Parodia subterranea* was found here, with a number of plants bearing attractive flowers - Brian and John were very pleased to see this since when not in flower, it’s a difficult plant to find.

We saw Wiebe posing near a Llaretta (*Azorella compacta*). This strange plant forms mounds consisting of millions of tiny little rosettes and it is usually found at 3000m or higher. They had timed their visit just right and found some lovely examples of *Lobivia ferox* (and possibly *L. longispina*) in flower. Sometimes, all you saw the flower with the body hidden. There were lichens around so this area must have high humidity. There were tremendous landscapes here and it was surprising how many different *Trichocereus* there were. *Trichocereus werdermanniana* had impressive 6 inch flowers. South of Camargo, on a track they found large numbers of *Weingartia fidaiana* which looked like brown furry balls. Some were clumping and some were growing quite tall. *Oreocereus celsianus* here was shorter than the ones in northern Argentina. Poking through the soil were starry white flowers of the bulb *Zephyranthes andina*. The *Parodias* here had red flowers rather than the yellow found at other locations. They were growing alongside *Rebutia albo-pectinata*. These were lovely plants but again the pictures were affected with over saturation.

*Maihueiniopsis subterranea* had flowers with similar colours to the Parodias and Rebutias.

Many roads are toll roads, so you often have to stop to buy tickets. Eventually they had a problem with their car - the clutch was burning out & slipping as they crossed over the pass into Tarija. Along the way, *Jatropha gossypifolia* has nice flowers but it is one of the stinging plants and is much worse than nettles. On another little trip north up into the hills, they found *Rebutia heliosa condorensis* at Paso del Condor (this was accompanied by the appropriate El Condor Pasa music).

They made quite a number of stops here, looking for the true *Rebutia heliosa*, and stopped at all the locations but did not find the plant with the typical tight spination which we are used to. There were two possibilities – either the nurseries had selected the prettiest ones and that's the one we see for sale - or the plant in cultivation is so popular that all the ones from habitat have been collected. The plants of *condorensis* were more typical and greener on the shadow side of the hill. This was at an altitude of about 3500 metres. While getting the car fixed, they decided to have a rest day in Tarija and sampled some large ice cream sundaes at the local restaurants. They also had trips to the local vinery – this was a fraction of the size of the Chilean vineries and did not produce enough to export. A visit to a second vinery suggested it was more of a shop with an interesting collection of bottles. Their guide for the day was an American, originally from Palm Springs. At La Casa Vieja, they were growing their own grapes and following the wine making process. The emphasis was on the bottles and the casks seemed to be replaced only when they had serious leaks. They ate at the Gattopardo restaurant in Tarija and had steak finished off with ice cream.

Travelling on to Yunchara, along the side of the road they found *Rebutia fusca* with flowers which acted like a stop light. Rebutias are happy to elongate rather than needing to be fully globular and this perhaps allows them to grow in more locations. There were lots of llamas grazing but they didn't seem to bother the cacti. *Lobivia pampana glauscens* had clear yellow flowers, and we saw mounds of *cumulopuntia* with yellow flowers and *Oreocereus trolli* (short) and *Oreocereus celsianus* (tall).

Now heading east from Tarija towards Villamontes, they were close to Paraguay and met up with *Cleistocactus straussi*. In habitat it is quite rare. They only found a small number on two hillsides. A *Rebutia* growing in a large clump of the bromeliad *Abromeitiella brevifolia* might have been *R.*

*muscula*. Plants in habitat do sometimes look different from those we cultivate, perhaps because of selection. A *Gymnocalycium* with buds and short flower tubes was one of *pflanzii* types, but the yellow-peachy flower colour had even Graham Charles bemused.

John was excited when they found an arum *Synandropadix vermitoxicus* – the latin name indicates it is poisonous. There were also bottle trees near the chaco (flat Paraguay landscape) – the outside temperatures were 40°C. There were no hills here and the land was flat and barren. The party split up here with Paul continuing on to Sucre.

They found *Cleistocactus*, and another *Echeveria*. There were also strands of *Rhipsalis* or *Lepismium*, and in general it was very lush. The tourist guide said this was one of the most scenic routes through the Andes so he filmed a bit of it. They found a nice *Borzacactus* with red flowers but it's not supposed to come from this area. They also found *Sulcorebutia roberto-vasquesiana* with heads 2 inches across – David Neville said this plant had a pure white flower. Their car now developed problems with the starter motor and they eventually found a mechanic called George who didn't like his picture being taken but who was willing to work on the car along with his coca-leaf chewing brother provided there was a flow of beer. The car did get fixed but the incident delayed them, so the remainder of the prettiest road in the Andes had to be driven in the dark - not something they usually did.

Back to a site near Sucre, they found *Sulcorebutia canigueralii*. There were huge ants here. When trying to get to Sucre, they were faced with a blockade, and what had earlier been a dry river bed was no longer dry, and required a detour. Sucre has a famous cement factory but about 10 years ago they found the remains of dinosaur tracks and now it has turned into a museum. This site has the largest collection of dinosaur relics anywhere on the planet. There were displays of some of the dinosaur footprints. Sucre itself is known as the white city because many of the buildings are painted white. The architecture was colonial and on some of the buildings we saw *Tillandsias* trying to grab a foothold the soft sandstone. A couple of views of the market suggest that health and safety officers might be kept rather busy.

On a day trip north from Sucre, they came across *Sulcorebutia losenickyana* with large magenta pink flowers. *Sulcorebutia vasquesiana* was growing as solitary headed plants with quite long spination. *Philibertia lysimachioides* had succulent leaves and a red flower. *Austrocylindriopuntia vestita* had red

flowers. *Sulcorebutia vasquesiana alba* is the white spined and its spination is quite different from the main species. Some dramatic scenery and a strange shaped tree indicated the locality of *Sulcorebutia frankiana*. We saw a picture of the group climbing a rocky incline, with Brian in sandals! Another Echeveria had short leaves and a chunky stalk. The older leaves were well coloured. A number of these did make it back to this country and will eventually make their way to John or Myron for identification. We saw a shot of the Bates "motel" – the family does move around and the remnants of his cactus collection was now just a handful of plants.

Now on to Tarrabuco. Microwave towers are good places to look for cacti – usually there is a good track to the top and the high elevation means there are no grazing goats or sheep. A Rebutia they found here was *R. fiebrigii tarabucoensis*. Another echeveria had a red margin to the leaves, and we also saw a puya in flower. On to another microwave tower and this time they found *Sulcorebutia rauschii*. This plant is very characteristic, and the spines are magnificent. John and Brian had never seen the plant in habitat. They were fortunate to see them so pumped up – usually they are drawn into the ground and very hard to spot. The plant can even flower and fruit whilst virtually underground. Near Zudanes, they found more of the plants, some in very good condition. They also found lobivias covered in dust and mud. Walking on to the next hill, they did not come across Rebutias or Sulcorebutias, but did find *Parodia tuberculata*. Another recently described plant which they found was *Sulcorebutia heliosoides*. He thought it resembled *S. arenaceae*. Some young children followed them and Brian gave them their first botanical lesson. The next shot featured a western black chested buzzard eagle. They found *Espostoa* (Vatricana) *guentheri*, complete with a side cephalium.

The "Ruta Del Che" refers to a trail of the movements of Che Guevara in Bolivia. There was also a sign pointing to Quebrada del Churo which is where he was captured in 1967 by the Bolivian Army. He was initially locked up in a school building in the town of La Higuera and then the instructions came through to execute him. They stayed in the telegraph office, which is now a small hotel run by a Frenchman.

It was time to return to Santa Cruz, and they encountered *Aylosteria vallegrandensis*. A queue on the road was not due to a blockade but a landslide. A digger came along and cleared the road in about an hour. They reached the town of Samaipatana and went to look for the monkey tail. They again found

Echeverias and the area seemed very popular with mosquitos. They came across peperomias and then found *Cleistocactus winteri ssp colademono* – the plants were growing from the base of bromeliads – and most of pictures had to be taken with a zoom lens. The excitement was not quite over – when they parked in front of the hotel, a corporal wanted to fine them \$250. Brian and John were whisked off to the local police station. Eventually they were forgiven and they were able to get out OK.

After the break Paul covered a visit to the Colorado plateau which was made earlier this year with Angie Money and Cliff Thompson, and also Eunice Thompson from California. His intention had been to focus on *Pediocactus*. Many of the locations were near national parks so it became a sight seeing tourist trip too. He commented that there seemed to be a lot of uncertainty and perhaps even disinformation about *Pediocactus*, perhaps in an effort to protect the habitat plants and people perhaps only reporting part of the story.

They flew into Phoenix. Paul showed the route they took, and on the first day they got to the Grand Canyon – with a detour to find *Pediocactus peeblesianus ssp fickeisenii f. menzelii*, which is named after his friend Juergen Menzel. It had started off as a very hot day in Phoenix but by lunchtime they were in snow and at high altitude. South of the Grand Canyon, they found *cylindropuntia fragilis*, and *echinocereus fendleri*. Indian paintbrush is a widespread parasitic plant with red flowers. A young plant was difficult to identify as a *Escobaria* or *Coryphantha vivipara*. It was Eunice – or rather her dog Bosco - who found the *Pediocactus*. The plant was in bud so it was too early for flowers. They were unable to find it at other locations. The land they were on was a Navajo reservation, and there were semi-wild horses who took a slight interest in them.

When they got to the Grand Canyon, it was just too big for the brain to comprehend. Paul said it was much more impressive to look at when they flew over it as they approached Phoenix. We saw a view down to the Colorado River at the bottom of the canyon, followed by *Escobaria vivipara* which was found in the canyon of the Little Colorado River. They were supposed to find *P. peeblesianus* here, but couldn't locate it. The Red Indian market stalls were great for Angie and Eunice. They also found *Echinocactus polycephalus var. xeranthemoides*. It is very difficult to grow this successfully in the UK or Europe. These were massive clumping plants (polycephala does mean many-headed). They also found *Echinocereus engelmannii* and *Echinocereus*

*triglochidiatus* – which goes by the common name “claret cup” due to the intense red flowers.

They went to Marble Canyon to see *Pediocactus bradyi*, although a visit to a medical centre was required first, to fix Angie’s shoulder. On the way in the background were the Vermillion Cliffs, so called because of the unusual rock colours. *Pediocactus bradyi* used to grow near Navajo bridge, but when the bridge was rebuilt, the population had to be moved to stop it becoming extinct. We saw the Colorado River at Lee’s Ferry. *Opuntia basilaris* (the beavertail cactus) in flower was quite a sight. Another opuntia with a similar flower colour was *Opuntia nicholii*. The rocks look quite large from a distance and were huge closer up. The plants are very endangered but there was still a clear signpost mentioning them, and a survey is done to check the populations which is claimed to be decreasing, but they are perhaps only looking at the original tagged plants and not at the new plants which have grown since.

They did find plants of *P. bradyi*, but sadly had just missed the flowering season and the fruits were not yet ripe. They again found *Echinocactus polycephalus* var. *xeranthemoides*. It was very scenic, with views of the canyons in the background. After Marble Canyon, it was time to move on to Kanab, and to look for *Pediocactus paradinei*. They did come across plants in flower and he did not consider them to be that different from *P. simpsonii*, although with mature plants you could see the long wispy spination which is typical of *P. paradinei*. *Pediocactus* are very difficult in cultivation in the UK – the plants rely on cold nights for the stomata to open up and the temperatures need to regularly be below 5°C, which would be very rare in our summers, but possible in the high altitude locations where they occur. They found more plants of *P. paradinei* on a flat plane and to his knowledge, these were not previously recorded. In a pine forest, they found more densely spined variants. At Kanab they found nothing in one location, but at another they found *Pediocactus sileri* with robust spination. It wasn’t until they were about to leave that they spotted “a no entry without written permission” sign. Paul and Cliff briefly considered writing a note to each other.

Paul mentioned that Google Maps and Google Earth are tremendous tools and helpful in estimating the distances and times they would be travelling for.

At Zion National Park, there was tremendous geology and scenery, and some of it again difficult to take in. They found *Yucca harrimaniae* and lots of opuntias. From Kanab they travelled to Torrey.

Wherever they found *Pediocactus*, they also tended to find *Escobaria* and *Coryphantha*, both of which can superficially look similar. You need to have a close look at the tubercles – if a groove is present it’s a *Coryphantha* or *Escobaria*, without the groove, it’s a *Pediocactus*. Paul also pointed out the dried-up tufts of grass in the photograph – one needed to look for this since it’s the sort of grass which is mimicked by *Toumeyia papyracantha*.

On his last visit to Bryce Canyon in 1997, snow had prevented him getting past the visitor centre. However, this time round, in the sunshine it was glorious. He and Angie walked below the rim for an hour and there was still snow in some of the shadows. The views are like a fairy castle. Bryce is very scenic and more compact than some of the other parks, and there were lots of tourists around.

Past Escalante, they saw lots of Aspen trees, with pines in the background – this was at an altitude of 3500m. On from Torrey, they headed for Capitol Reef. Google maps had suggested a round trip of 320 miles and the satellite navigation unit had said the distance to the first *Pedio* stop was 150 miles. They took a random side road, and eventually found *Pedios* at another location, near a lake. The plants in flower were the ones which were easy to spot and as usual you spotted more in due course. There were juniper and pine trees growing on the slight slopes. The name *Pediocactus* actually originates from the field / flat areas and this is their preferred habitat. You had to get down on your hands and knees to check for the groove on the tubercle. There were multi-headed plants around, but you couldn’t be sure whether they were one plant or several plants growing together. At Capitol Reef National Park, there was a “claret cup” in flower right in front of the visitor centre. This was very photogenic and his Nikon could handle the red on this flower, having also stopped down by one stop on the exposure. He took a picture of the plant with the visitor centre in the background and sent it into the park, who liked it enough to feature it on their website for a while. They also found a number of *Sclerocactus* there. He wasn’t sure of the exact identity – he thought it might be *S. whipplei* although the park’s plant list mentioned *S. parviflorus*. *Pediocactus simpsonii* also grew there. Angie found a plant with a crest, but it was difficult to work out whether it was a *Sclerocactus* or *Echinocereus triglochidiatus*.

From Green River, they made a trip to Arches National Park. The erosion here has left stone arches in the scenery and there are also very spectacular balanced rocks. It was very hot but there was still snow and ice visible on the hills and mountains in the background. One of the arches which had been

there on his trip in 1997 was no longer there, but there was now a sign saying "Broken Arch". "Delicate Arch" is one of the more popular destinations in the park. As they drove out of the park they spotted a large *Sclerocactus parviflorus* on the side of the road and they turned round to come back and take pictures of it. They found other smaller ones too. He had not done background reading on *Sclerocactus* so was not sure how important the flower colour of *S. parviflorus* is. He said he would be visiting Ian Woolnough and may have to discuss this over a few pints of Guinness.

From here they went on to Goblin State Park, and found *Sclerocactus whipplei* and *Yucca battata*. This park was discovered by accident when a couple of cowboys took a shortcut through a canyon and came across the strange lumpy rock and sandstone formations. *Pediocactus* have been reported from here, but in 1999 the park was used to film parts of the movie *Galaxy Quest*, and one can imagine the impact and damage caused by a large film crew trampling around for several weeks. Further north, they reached Vernal - the coldest place in Utah. Ian Woolnough had suggested that basketball sized *Sclerocactus parviflorus* were growing behind the Super 8 motel - but the plants they found were much smaller. They were nice plants with nice spines and still in bud due to the lower temperatures here.

Heading into Colorado at the Dinosaur State Park, they found a small cactus resembling a South American *Tephrocactus* and then *Escobaria missouriensis*. This is quite variable and has a huge distribution. They also found a type of sedum. *Pediocactus simpsonii* had yellow flowers. There was impressive scenery in the background. At the Colorado National Monument, near Grand Junction, the Internet plant list said *Pediocactus* should be found here. They went to the visitor centre, but the resident expert wasn't there and besides he only dealt with common names, not latin names, although they did identify a butterfly for them. This was typical juniper pine forest, the sort of habitat you would expect for *Pediocactus*. They found *Escobaria missouriensis* and *Sclerocactus parviflorus* and also the yellow flowered double bladder pod plant (*Physaria* - a member of the mustard family).

In this region, the soft rock had been eroded by the river and you end up with dramatic cliffs. People have found this to be interesting throughout the ages and between 800-1200AD, the Anasazi natives made their homes in cliff dwellings. The San Juan Mountains are part of the Rocky Mountains. Ouray was a scenic old-style town. As they were climbing continuously, the aspen trees along the road told you

that you were at 3000m or higher. There was snow piled up by side of road. Their sat nav reported an altitude of 3236m, and the highest peaks around were supposed to be 4361m. A sign on the side of road said "No snow clearing on Saturdays and Sundays". Their first attempt at looking for *Pediocactus knowltonii* using information from the Colorado State University herbarium's website proved to be unsuccessful, although they did get a nice picture of a prairie dog. They were in Ute Indian territory and he got the impression they didn't really like you to be there. They had arrived on a Sunday and had to wait until Monday to get a permit, so in the meantime they went to Mesa Verde State Park and found *Escobaria vivipara* - looking very similar to *Pediocactus simpsonii*. Here they also saw some of the famous cliff dwellings. You can pay a local guide from one of the tribes for a tour but a telephoto shot from distance was just as good. It was not clear why in 1200AD the civilisation died out - he wondered whether their grain crops had failed after dry spells. They had another look for *P. knowltonii*, at a location 300m across the border in New Mexico. This was on public land and they did find plants, but all appeared to be *P. simpsonii*. All the landmarks he had been told about were there, so he was sure he was in the right location. He did not cross to the other side of the road because of the fence, but later learnt that the *P. knowltonii* that grow there are at very restricted locations. He wondered whether it was a proper species or some sort of sport.

They went on to Four Corners, which is the location where 4 states (Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico) all meet at one point. They continued to the town of Mexican Hat in Utah. There are very interesting rock formations and the centre of attraction is the hat shaped balanced rock itself. In the village, they stayed in the San Juan Inn which is situated on the San Juan River. The poppies there are well armoured too and we saw yuccas in flower. The next day, Angie had gone across the river to photograph the hotel and she didn't come back for a while. This is because she found hundreds and hundreds of plants of *Sclerocactus parviflorus*, many of which were in flower. He had been there in 1997 and was completely unaware of these plants. The flowers varied in size, colour and even the tips of the petals ranged from being pointed or rounded, and there was also a variety in the spination. The flower colours ranged from dark purple to snow white. It is a shame that these plants are not easier in cultivation - he's never had much luck. Apparently there is a 7 year life cycle - if the population is really healthy, borer beetles take over, kill the plants and then they die out. The seed bank in the soil allows the population to re-establish itself and the

whole cycle repeats. It is almost impossible to grow from seed because the seeds need scarification.

Moving on, we saw the typical views of Monument Valley. It is situated in Navajo country and entrance is not covered by the National Parks pass, so it costs an additional \$35 to go in there. Goosenecks State Park is north of the San Juan Inn and according to their website, is “recognized as one of the best examples of entrenched river meanders in the world”. What this means is that you get some spectacular views of winding water trails amongst an interesting landscape. Mexican Hat is home to Swingin’ Steak, and a video courtesy of Angie showed what this meant. Paul and Cliff had 20-oz ribeye steaks, with door-step slices of toast and these were prepared over a swinging grill. The chef does this non-stop from 3pm to 11pm. It wasn’t particularly busy but just as they were leaving, a coach party of Germans showed up. David asked if there was a vegetarian option and Paul suggested this was not something you dare mention! Back in Arizona, Canyon de Chelly is another park with interesting rock landscapes and ruins of ancient civilisations. The holes in the rock ledges were allegedly grain stores. As they headed further south, *Cylindropuntias* began to appear again and they also found a nice “claret cup” in flower.

Just outside of Holbrook, they found *Sclerocactus whipplei*, at the city limits sign. There were plants of all sizes here. The terrain consisted of flat pavements of sandstone. They also found one example of *Toumeyia papyracantha*. This was a tiny little plant and very hard to spot since its papery spines resemble the grass. Angie eventually found one as well. Also growing amongst the cracks in the rocks was *Escobaria missouriensis*. This occurs in around half a dozen states - except Missouri – the name was given because it was found in Dakota, overlooking the Missouri River. The area had received some recent rains, and sandy mud had filled the cracks where the plants were growing and the water had also caused the plants to swell up, making them easier to spot. There were fruits on the plants, but unfortunately, no live seed. They also came across *Echinocereus fendleri*. As they approached Phoenix, the Saguaros began to reappear – this area is lower in altitude and it is less likely for frosts to occur. On the last day, they went to the Phoenix Desert Botanic Gardens - but that’s worth a talk in its own right.

Vinay Shah

## Table Show Results

There were 12 entries in the June table show.

	Cacti – Parodia	Succulents – Crassula
Open	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Notocactus magnificus</i>	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Dudleya britonii</i>
	(2) -	(2) B Beckerleg <i>Crassula susannae</i>
	(3) -	(3) J Roskilly <i>Adromischus cooperi</i>
Intermediate	(1) J Roskilly <i>Notocactus sp.</i>	(1) T Radford <i>Adromischus alveolatus</i>
	(2) B Beckerleg <i>Parodia escayachensis</i>	(2) T Radford <i>Adromischus sp.</i>
	(3) -	(3) J Roskilly <i>Crassula tecta</i>

Ivor Biddlecombe

## Branch Committee Meeting

A committee meeting was held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June and Dot England hosted us for the evening.

Recent branch events and meetings were discussed. The cultivation evening had again gone well, with members showing a high level of interest. A number of members attended the open day at the Flangans.

John Pilbeam donated a few of his spare books to the library. Ciprian has also done a good job of selling of some of our surplus books during his visits to Eastern Europe. The new book on *Echinocereus* has been purchased by the library.

David mentioned that the Branch had received a donation from one of the members, who had expressed gratitude and thanks for the monthly meetings that we hold. He also mentioned that he had received books of raffle tickets to raise funds for the National Show.

Ivor had purchased a new gazebo to replace the previous one which was found to not be waterproof, and it was agreed this would become branch property and that the branch would pay for the cost.

Preparations for the New Forest Show were discussed. Last year we spent over £100 on buying additional tickets to allow our display and stand to be manned and then we were eventually given spares at the event itself. Had we known this, we could have saved a lot of money. Unfortunately whether or not we will get any spare tickets isn't known up front so we will again have to purchase tickets in advance.

A date for the Branch dinner was agreed as 24<sup>th</sup> August. The next committee meeting was scheduled for 13<sup>th</sup> August, and it was likely this would be held at Dot's.

*Vinay Shah*

## Next Month's Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on August 7<sup>th</sup> and will feature Eddy Harris who will be talking about plant collections in South Africa.

The August Table Show will consist of the **Mammillaria** group (cacti) and the **Euphorbia** group (succulents). Please note that members can submit more than one entry in any of the classes, and that points will be earned for each placed entry.

The **Mammillaria** group contains 13 genera, including *Mammillaria*, *Bartschella*, *Cochemiea*, *Dolichothele*, *Mamillopsis*, *Mammillyodia* and *Solisia*.

The **Euphorbia** group only contains *Euphorbia*.

## Forthcoming Events

Sat 14 <sup>th</sup>	Jul	Isle of Wight	"What I Did Last Winter" - Paul Klaassen
Sat 21 <sup>st</sup>	Jul	Portsmouth	"My World of Mammillarias" - Tony Roberts
Tue 24 <sup>th</sup>	Jul-	Southampton	Display / Plant Sales @ New Forest Show, Brockenhurst
Thu 26 <sup>th</sup>			
Tue 7 <sup>th</sup>	Aug	Southampton	"South Africa Tamed - Kirstenbosch & Other Collections" - Eddy Harris
Thu 9 <sup>th</sup>	Aug	Isle of Wight	Open Evening at Mark Bulloch, 28 Western Road, Shanklin
Mon 13 <sup>th</sup>	Aug	Southampton	Branch Committee Meeting
Sat 18 <sup>th</sup>	Aug	Portsmouth	no meeting
Sat 18 <sup>th</sup>	Aug		BCSS National Show – Godmanchester, Cambs
Fri 24 <sup>th</sup>	Aug	Southampton	Annual Branch Dinner
Mon 27 <sup>th</sup>	Aug	Portsmouth	Display/Plant Sales @ Emsworth Horticultural Society Show TBC
Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>	Sep	Southampton	"Shows, Collections and Nurseries in the USA" - Stuart Riley
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sep	Southampton	Display / Plant Sales @ Romsey Show, Broadlands, Romsey
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup>	Sep	Isle of Wight	"Arizona Byways" - Trevor Wray
Sat 15 <sup>th</sup>	Sep	Portsmouth	"Socotra" - Bob Potter
Tue 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Sep	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Autumn Show @ Christ Church Hall, Widley, Waterlooville

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