

British Cactus & Succulent Society

Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

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Editorial

The last couple of weeks have seen some very warm weather and I hope you have all been watering your plants. Although my collection contains more succulents than cacti, the latter have been reminding me of their presence by producing a succession of bright flowers.

Announcements

On Sunday 26th July, Alice will be hosting the **Branch Garden Party** – all are welcome, and food and refreshments will be provided by the branch. Maps are available on the front table. The week after that, the Branch will have a stand at the **New Forest Show**. As usual we have been restricted in the number of tickets and passes, but we have a rota worked out for the event.

On Saturday 1st August, members from the Branch will be visiting the **Oxford Branch Show + Haworthia Show**. There is a form on the front table to register your interest in going to this event (we will try and operate a car share scheme).

At the August meeting, we will be holding a **plant auction**. Details of this are noted later in the newsletter. Also, the Branch will be holding the **Annual Branch Dinner** on Friday 21st August. Maps are available on the front table.

Last Month's Meeting

Namibia - Plants & Animals

Chris thanked the Branch for inviting him. When David phoned him last year to book the talk, he had

only done the talk once. In the last few years leading up to retirement he and his wife had planned to visit South Africa - but instead the opportunity to visit Namibia came up - there was an advert in the Mesemb Study Group bulletin, advertising a trip / safari to Namibia. This was organised by Roy Earle, who is a vet from Coventry but who was Namibian. In May 2014 they flew to Johannesburg - and then flew across to Windhoek - there are no direct flights from the UK. They spent a day at Windhoek, then went south for a day, then north to Etosha National Park for 3 days and then worked down the west coast of the country, visiting Walvis Bay, then to Lüderitz, across Fish River Canyon and back to Windhoek. Altogether they must have travelled a couple of thousand miles – Namibia is the 7th largest country in the world. There isn't much traffic on the roads though!

They would travel with Tok Schoeman, who lives in Windhoek and has written a couple of articles in the Mesemb bulletin. We saw his shade house where he had some large clumps of plants. His top dressing consisted of boulders collected from the habitat of where the plant was found. Plants we saw included *Lithops localis*, *Aloe erinacea*, *Euphorbia gymnocalycioides*, *Lithops aucampiae* v. *euniceae* 'Bellaketty' and *L. hermetica*, which comes from the diamond area. Roy Earle decided to take the approach of collecting rocks from the locality of the plants to heart so he must have had a heavy bag to bring back to England! Tok's pots were 8-9 inches square and several inches deep. A new addition to his family was a cat who was on guard duty. In the front garden were plants of *Cyphostemma juttae* (growing beautifully) as well as *Stapelia gigantea*.

They travelled 60km south. A flowering bulb was tentatively identified as *Morea fugax*. *Avonia albissima* was very common through Namibia and it was an "indicator" plant - when you saw it, there was a good chance that *Lithops* were nearby. Unfortunately, from the party of 7 and he seemed to be the worst at spotting them. The first *Lithops* they found was *Lithops pseudotruncatella dendritica*. They also found *Ebracteola montis-moltkei*. A couple of months before they flew out, Roy had sent him an email saying they had had some rain in Namibia and this bode well for the plants - however

the plants were very dry and what they call a good rain out there must differ from our definition. We saw an armoured ground cricket - these are everywhere and are around 3 inches long. They eat everything, including Lithops. We also saw an Asclepias, recognised because of its seed pod. Near Groendraai, a picture showed everyone in the group bent over looking at the ground and Chris mentioned they often ended the day with sore backs from bending over. An Ebracteola had a magenta flower. A Lithops was the same colour as the background - this was *Lithops pseudotruncatella* ssp. *groendrayensis* - it was well camouflaged and had sunk into the ground. There were 2-3 plants in a picture and they were hard to spot.

Coming across a fence, Tok and others climbed over it, and a farmer's workhand came to investigate. Nearly everywhere they went involved climbing through fences. *Platycarpella carlinoides* were leafy plants with a purple central flowering area - these plants were apparently dug up with the root being used as a vegetable. He found his first Monsonia (Sarcocaulon). The nickname for this plant is bushman's candles due to the flammable wax on the stems, and he had thought you'd need to break pieces off a plant - but in practice there were so many broken bits lying around, there was no need to damage a live plant. These must have been quite big plants once upon a time. *Aloe hereroensis* had inflorescences which were chest high. On the ground, we could see pieces of quartz going off into the distance.

Karanas is a new site for a Lithops. They got to a farm and the farmer wasn't there but the workhand phoned up and they were given permission to look around. He pushed past an acacia - there are 22 species in Namibia and he thinks he must have been stung by all of them. It's a vicious plant and because of its invasive nature, it's against the law to plant it in Namibia. They found *Euphorbia hamata*, with quartz all around it. They also found *Lithops pseudotruncatella* ssp. *groendrayensis*, with 3 plants in one of the pictures. The majority of plants they saw were single headed. They also found one that had flowered - there were the dried signs of a flower. They found *Tavaresia barklyi*, with seed horns - it was growing underneath a bush. Nearby they also found a "twin" which was growing out in the sun. There was a mesemb of some sort growing next to this second plant, but he was unable to identify it. An Aloe might have been *A. esculenta*. Another Aloe was *A. marlothi* which was 12 feet tall - it is considered one of the tree aloes.

At a "Tropic of Capricorn" sign, we saw a picture of the group, featuring Greg Daniels (Australia), Marc

Lugan (?) (Carcassonne, France), Chris, his wife Joyce, Alice Daniels, Roy Earle, Don Smith and Tok Schoeman. This photo was actually taken by a Chinese man who they came across and who was doing a tour across Africa - with a push bike laden with boxes and bundles and containers. He must have had superhuman strength just to push it.

We saw a game fence (taller than the normal fences) and a large termite's mound - apparently as much of the nest is below ground as is above, and this was 12 feet high and 12 feet across. A road sign showing a leaping antelope seemed to be saying "beware of low flying antelope". They saw a single red hartebeest - and later a herd of them along the road. Chris mentioned he ate their meat during the trip (he also tried other antelope meat) and all were delicious.

They got to Etosha and we saw one of the chalets at Okaukuejo which they were staying in. They were allowed to drive around in their own car but it made sense to wind up the windows when lions were nearby! They saw some zebras - and apparently there are two types (plains and mountain) and they can be distinguished by stripes on the legs. We also saw wildebeest with springbok in the background. Burchell's Starling is a bird with glossy plumage, the size of a crow. A pied crow was less colourful. We also saw elephants - there was a watering hole which was just 20-30 metres from the chalets, and this was rigged up with lights to show the animals at night. They were just having a bath during the day. We also saw the Namibian sand grouse. There were quite large groups of zebra at times. One of Marc's pictures was of a pearl spotted owlet. A social weaver bird's nest was 10 foot across from side to side. They are sparrow sized birds. Not all are social - some make solitary nests. A group of warthogs were walking along the road as if they owned it - it seemed like an advert for a Disney film. They saw ground squirrels and these were the same size as our grey squirrels. They saw a pair of double banded courser birds - one running up and down the side of the road and the partner flying overhead backwards and forwards and eventually realised they were trying to distract them from a couple of babies. They also saw a rock kestrel.

The water hole was the place to be - they saw Rüppell's korhaan - these were big birds - turkey sized and waist high. The Secretary bird is named due to the feathers on the back of its head. A plant of *Aloe esculenta* was not quite in flower. The Kori bustard is the largest flying bird in Namibia - and when one of these flew over their van, it was a bit like Concorde going overhead. At another watering hole, they saw Antelope one side and Zebra the

other, but the animals were all a bit skittish, and then they saw the heads of some lions. Ostriches are fairly common as a bird. Kudu are quite big antelopes and they have big horns too, although only the male has them. The Oryx here were not the same as the Arabian Oryx but they are larger and also have very handsome horns.

Namutoni Fort was built by the Germans. In a hole in the ground were several dozen banded mongooses - they were very keen on scrounging food from tourists. We then saw a video clip of two giraffes fighting - they were hitting each other quite hard with their necks. Back at the water hole, the dik dik is the smallest of the antelopes, being only knee high. Only the male has horns and they have beautiful big eyes. Monteiro's hornbill was spotted in a tree. Driving along the road, they spotted a wriggly thing and this was a giant millipede - Chris mentioned at his branch, a member from Zimbabwe described how the natives there used to call them jelly lollies - and used them as food! There were butterflies around but they were very active and it was difficult to get pictures of them. They were expecting to find Lithops here but didn't see any. They did see *Pachypodium lealli*, and this is something he grows at home. He got to see how large they can become. A locust was well camouflaged. They found more *Pachypodiums* and we saw their nice bark.

It was time to leave Etosha and head west. *Euphorbia avasmontana* is one of the larger euphorbias and the plant was 8 feet tall, but it is not considered a tree euphorbia. It was growing out of the side of a rock and he wondered how far the roots go down. A picture of Don being held by Roy and Marc was not a disagreement of some sort - 3 weeks before the trip Don had a knee replacement and he had fallen over, and was being helped back to his feet.

Euphorbia damarana is a stick Euphorbia which appears to be highly toxic. At the beginning of the last century, in Namibia a group of 8-9 migrant workers were found dead around a camp fire - they had used *Euphorbia damarana* as the fuel for a fire. We saw a close up of the seed capsule - he was glad he hadn't attempted to collect any! We saw *Commiphora pyracanthoides* in the background. This is found all over Africa and it is one of the relatives of frankincense. The trees often get smashed by elephants. Near Swakopmund, they found flamingos in a lagoon just inland from the sea. Also here were some Badlands, with moonscape type geology. There was granite here and the ground was very hard. The channels in the rocks suggested at one stage there must have been a

lot more water here and apparently, 300,000 years ago, the lake at Etosha was larger than Lake Victoria.

While driving on a graded road, they spotted a road maintenance vehicle with a blade 20 feet wide. This was basically scraping the surface flat, with the scrapings dropping off to the sides. In other places it was very sandy and the roads were covered in sand, and this has to be cleared periodically.

Near Khorixas they were on the Welwitschia trail. He had seen this plant growing at Kew, where they were growing it in deep clay drain pipes - but here there were stones around the plants, where people were asked to keep off the ground since it appears there are shallow feeding roots all around the plant. These are amazing plants, which are very long lived. They grow just one pair of leaves but these fray in the wind and look like multiple fronds. The plants are asexual and we saw the cones on a female plant. The plants grow along the coastline of Namibia and continue into Angola. One plant, the oldest in the area had been fenced off and an observation gallery with information about the plant had been created. The oldest plants are thought to be 1600 years old! The plants are not rare and they could see dozens of them off in the distance. The wooden toilet huts here were not recommended - his wife went in one and said it was the most disgusting toilet she had ever seen. We saw *Aloe asperula* growing on a rock shelf, it was difficult to see where there was any space for its roots to go. These were nice looking plants. We also saw *Lithops gracilidelineata*. The tok tok beetle was a star of a David Attenborough documentary on Namibia - in the early morning it stands on its head and water condenses on the body and runs down to his head. We also saw what the sea mists look like. An unidentified *Senecio* was in flower.

On the road to Walvis Bay, they found examples of *Lithops gracilidelineata* ssp. *brandbergensis*, with a seed pod on one plant and some quite big clumps. Some were growing in a place where water could settle and perhaps this gave the plants more of a chance. They found more plants of the Lithops, *Euphorbia lignosa* and *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*. Near the Rossing Uranium mine, they got bogged down but were eventually able to push the car out onto firmer ground. *Lithops ruschiorum* was growing in little clumps. We also saw scenes from the Namib Desert, which features the largest sand dunes in the world.

They were now half way down the west coast of Namibia and we saw plants of *Aloe dichotoma*, including some plants in bud. The scenery was quite

impressive. It was very windy on the road and quite steep in some places. At Spreetshoogte he encountered a place where labourers seemed to be laying bricks on the road surface and Ian Acton mentioned this might be because there's a fault line here and a conventional road surface would crack. On the side of the road was a Hoodia which he couldn't identify since it was not in flower and didn't have any seed pods either. Ian suggested it might be *H. currorii*. At Solitaire farm they were able to get petrol and this was also the only bakery they encountered during their travels in Namibia. A sign on the wall indicated how much rain they had had in previous months and years. He had a piece of apple crumble which was 6 inches square and 4 inches deep and it took him ages to finish.

A bulb seemed to be some species of Crinum. In the middle of the road they saw a venomous puff adder – but it had been run over. A mesemb species – looked a little like his Cephalophyllum plants. Here there were volcanic intrusions called inselbergs. On one day, there was some cloud in the sky and they had rain for ½ hour. They found *Lithops schwantesii* v. *guliemii* (C184) – this was a handsome looking plant which matched the colour of the substrate it was growing in. They walked up and down some hills and when walking down a slope to their lodges, they found a Larryleachia - quite a choice one – which was growing very well there. They were now at the Namtib Biosphere Reserve. *Aloe dichotoma* forms handsome looking trees but you would need a big greenhouse to grow them. On a nature walk, they found *Euphorbia damarana* again. On the other side of the rocks was *Hydnora africana* which is a parasite. Its roots go under the rocks to tap into the roots of the Euphorbia. The flowers on the hydnora have strange teeth on them.

We saw Monsonia in leaf and flower, looking relatively healthy. *Lithops gesinae* ssp *gesinae* is beautifully coloured and marked, and the “indicator” plant *Avonia albissima* was nearby. As they walked down the path they found 2 heads of a beautifully coloured Stapeliad in the middle of the path – they found the main clump nearby. H brought the pieces home and now it has 4 heads, but it remains unidentified. They were in the Tiras mountains and something the size of a rabbit scuttled across them – these were Rock hyraxes. We saw another view of the landscape. They came across a large population of *Cheiridopsis caroli-schmidtii* – there must have been several hundred clumps here and he brought some seed capsules home. “Bella” means beautiful but *Lithops bella* here was not looking in good shape – although some clumps were up to 20 heads. David asked if it had been a hard year for the plants and the evidence suggested yes. We saw more of

the scenery. We saw *Augea capensis* growing in the sand. Brownanthus is a mesemb and when he asked Suzanne Mace, she didn't know of anyone in the country growing it – well, he brought a seed pod home and is now growing it! Plants of *Juttadinteria simpsonii* were quite large with seed pods but again looked in need of some moisture. East of Luderitz they found their first Conophytum – *C. khamiesbergense* which is one of the small headed ones. It was in bud in May. *Lithops pseudotruncatella* looked nice and pumped up and was well marked. Monsonia here seemed to be surviving, but the Tylecodon were all small. *Crassula muscosa* (*lycopodioides*) is common. *Lithops franciscii* was found here. It was quite windy here and he almost lost his hat. *Namibia ponderosa/cinerea* is a chunky mesemb. They saw *Pelargonium mirabile* growing on a cliff face and its stems make a ball shape. He got one from Specks in a 3 inch pot, but these were 12-15 inches across. *Lithops francisii* only grows in this area. When turgid it makes a nice looking plant, but it is rare in cultivation and is difficult to keep alive. Now at Luderitz, they saw a *Crassula* species growing on top of the broken rock, and *Sarcocaulon patersonii*. *Conophytum saxatanum* was another of the small ones, and David Neville mentioned it was the northernmost of all the Conophytums.

A tylecodon had 2 heads and some seed pods - empty seed pod. They found *Lithops optica* - both the normal brown version and also the rubra form. South of Luderitz there was a sign saying keep out - this was the diamond area. *Fenestraria rhopalophylla* is supposed to be common, but they only found one after brushing some of the sand away. Another Tylecodon looked nice - if they grew like that in cultivation, more people would grow them. They came across an Othonna and also a mesemb, which might have been a Ruschia - this was at Rosh Pinah.

After climbing over a fence, they found Monsonias growing actively. A *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum* was looking much better than the one he had seen before and it was colouring up very well in the open. Marc continued climbing to the peak of the hill to try and find *Conophytum quaesitum* but he was unsuccessful.

Now at Aus, the plants were much more interesting since they were in flower and the population of *Lithops karasmontana bella* was better than the populations they had seen before. Some were hidden underneath a bush. At another place they found *Lithops schwantesii* which was a different variety and much paler than the plants they had seen before. During their last couple of days, they visited the

Alte Kalköfen Lodge which houses a collection called the Cole lithoparium - we saw pictures of some of the plants. One interesting idea was to plant the Lithops with other plants also found in their habitat. From there, they visited Fish River Canyon - this is the second deepest in the world, and is over 500m deep at the deepest point. There must have been a great deal of water in Namibia at one time. A Euphorbia species was photographed at a distance with a telephoto lens. The grey form of *Lithops schwantesii* was growing just a foot from the edge of the edge of the canyon. *Lithops karasmontana* f. *mickbergensis* was growing there too. They also found *Crassula coralita* - quite a nice one. They found more Lithops and were able to photograph multiple clumps in one photograph. An aloe might have been *Aloe sladeniana*, which has some similarities to *Aloe variegata*.

They found a bushmanland tent tortoise walking along the middle of the road and he was retrieved and put on the side. East of Grunau, they found *L. karasmontana* f. *mickbergensis* growing under "nursery" bushes and also *Dinteranthus inexpectatus*. They found more *Lithops karasmontana*, a big plant *Euphorbia rudis* and also *Lapidaria margaritae*, west of Warmbad, including some in flower. *Conophytum friedrichiae* was trying to hide from them, it can be found in red or green forms. *Euphorbia spinea* was well camouflaged. They found a Ledebouria and the green form of *C. friedrichiae*. He also found *Larryleachia cactiforme* - some were large clumps containing 6 heads and were in flower. *Crassula mesembryanthemopsis* is one of the choice crassulas. The Signalberg Mountains were off to their left. They were at Mickberg and found *Lithops karasmontana* - near the Karas Mountains. Also growing here was one of his favourite plants - *Titanopsis hugo-schlechteri*. These were growing well and the colour of the new growths matched the colour of the terrain. *Euphorbia namibensis* was colouring up nicely. They had not seen many reptiles on the trip but we saw a skink which is similar to a lizard. They also found *Lithops karasmontana* ssp. *aiaisensis*. A *Ceraria namaquensis* at Canyon Lodge was a fine specimen - his plant at home was a foot tall. He ended with *Lithops fulviceps* and a picture where he asking us to count how many well-camouflaged Lithops plants we could see.

Vinay Shah

Table Show Results

There were 18 entries in the June table show, and 9 entries for "Plants in Flower".

	Cacti – Parodia	Succulents – Mesembs
Open	(1) I Biddlecombe Notocactus magnificus	(1) B Beckerleg Glottiphyllum sp.
	(2) I Biddlecombe Parodia sp	(2) I Biddlecombe Titanopsis hugo-schlechteri
	(3) B Beckerleg Notocactus leninghausii	(3) I Biddlecombe Trichodiadema bulbosum
Intermediate	(1) B Beckerleg Parodia escayensis	(1) I Biddlecombe
	(2) I Biddlecombe Parodia maxima	(2) B Beckerleg
	(3) S Wilson Notocactus mammulosus	(3) I Biddlecombe

Cacti/Succulent in Flower

- | |
|---|
| (1) G Penrose
Puna bonnieae |
| (2) G Penrose
Puna subterranea |
| (3) I Biddlecombe
Echinocereus pentalophus |

Ivor Biddlecombe

Bookworm Corner

Well I should think that most of the cacti are feeling at home lately with all this roasting hot weather (bubble wrap still up but plenty of glass removed). I am looking forward to cooler weather and a bit of rain although listening to the radio as I write this they are saying hotter summers will become the norm!

The marsh has taken on a purple haze with the sea lavender now out in flower. It is a much quieter place in the summer with the majority of the wildfowl and waders in their breeding territories at home and abroad. The birds making the most noise at the moment are the black-headed, Mediterranean and herring gulls, with fewer sandwich and common terns to be watched fishing if you are lucky. However, a few curlew have returned, possibly from the Forest.

Flowering in the cacti house has slowed down, however the *Parodias* are looking lovely with predominantly largish yellow flowers, *Acanthocalycium* in pink and quite a number of *Gymnocalycium* of various hues. There has been a good succession of *Astrophytum* flowers this year, much better than usual. Not sure why..? The *Opuntias* have been flowering very well this year and don't they grow on rapidly if they are potted up and very well watered. On the succulent front not so much is flowering at the moment. The lithops have pretty much all plumped up with their new leaves but no sign of flower buds yet.

Do come and have a look at the **Books For Sale** down in the library corner.

'ENJOYED THE LECTURE? THEN ENJOY THE BOOK!'

June

Chris Eyers gave an illustrated presentation on 'Namibia – plants and animals'. Lithops are included in the flora of the region so if these plants are of interest you may want to study them further. Books in the library include '**Lithops, Flowering Stones**' (Cole. D.T.) has an interesting chapter on morphology, including a section of seed capsules. Other chapters include habitat with some excellent habitat location pictures; cultivation and species descriptions with colour photographs and helpful distribution maps. The other book is '**Lithops – Treasures of the Veld**' (Hammer S.A), this has species descriptions and excellent pictures on species and cultivars. A key for identifying species is located in appendix 8. Another common genus is the aloe and we have an excellent book '**Aloes – The Definitive Guide**' (Carter S. *et al*) which covers everything from the history of aloes in books and historic collectors through to a brief account on distribution and uses. The main use of the book is for identification with the key separated out on the growth habit of the plants. Each species then has a brief description and a few photographs.

July

This month we have Keith and Kathy Flanagan giving a talk titled 'Our Collection'. This is another tricky one to tie books from the library with, however I am sure a few of our more general books should inspire members to have a go at something different that is seen in tonight's presentation. One book worth looking at is '**The Cactus Family**' (Anderson E.F). This large book not only gives specific descriptions on each species but has a number of informative chapters covering subjects such as what are the distinctive features of cacti including some super electron microscope

photographs of pollen and seed. The chapter on ethnobotany describes the history of cacti and humans, such as cave paintings of cacti in Brazil dating 12,000 years ago, so the BCSS had some early members! Other chapters include conservation, cultivation and classification. Overall a good read.

'**Cactus and succulents in the garden**' (Bell S.A.) is an interesting book which includes ideas on planting them in the garden such as in combination with other garden plants, in containers and used as bedding. At the back of the book is a list of frost resistant plants. All of these books are to be found in '**Featured Book Corner**'.

Sue Wilson

Desert Island Cacti Books!

Everyone has heard of the Radio Four programme 'Desert Island Discs' so I thought it would be interesting to have a little play about with this concept and do a book version especially for the Southampton BCSS! Here is the second edition of this very occasional series and our castaway this time is our regular speaker from darkest Devon, **Ian Woolnough!**

Questions:

1. How old were you when you first started collecting cacti/succulents?

It was before I went away to college, perhaps when I was 17 (not long ago!) as I remember that when I returned home during the holidays most had died as my Mum didn't think they needed any watering! Only had a few on a table by the window in my bedroom along with an attempt to produce peanuts which although they grew didn't produce any nuts!

2. What do you prefer, cacti or succulents and why?

Cacti. They are proper plants that don't need cooking instructions ☺

3. How many greenhouses do you have?

Not enough. Ok technically 5 but 1 is a home-made lean to from spare parts and doesn't really count. The others are 20 x 10 (too wide as 8ft is better), 16 x 8, 14 x 8 and 10 x 8.

4. Do you share your house with any of the cacti/succulents?

Yes as many as I can get away with – more than my wife would like but less than I would.

- 5. What cacti/succulent book is currently on your bedside table, and if the answer is none, then why not?**

My "library" is in our lounge so no books in the bedroom.

- 6. If you could ask Father Christmas for any cacti/succulent book (in or out of print or even one not written yet) what would it be or at least what would the subject matter be about?**

I'm lucky enough to have been able to get hold of pretty much all the books I've wanted from various sources. The only one I'm currently after is volume 3 of the 3 volume cacti of Mexico (in Spanish) as I have a copy of volume 2 and have been lent a copy of volume 1.

- 7. Is there a specific book that you would recommend all newcomers to the hobby read?**

I always think the Erik Haustein "The Cactus handbook" is a well illustrated, informative and affordable beginners book but for serious growers the New Cactus Lexicon takes some beating.

- 8. What is your favourite cacti/succulent book?**

This varies by my mood and requirements. The new Cactus Lexicon is often used but so are more specialist books such as Katterman's Eriosyce book or John Pilbeam's Mammillaria book. I love the pictures in the Japanese Hybrid Astrophytum book by Roman Pavlica and Sumiriro Saeki though so that is probably my favourite "Coffee table" book.

- 9. If you could only have one cacti family to take with you to the desert island what would it be?**

I'm assuming that there will already be Melocacti there (it is a desert Island) so would take Astrophytums with me. As I could hybridize them ad nauseum it would keep me out of mischief whilst I was waiting to be rescued.

- 10. And succulents to go with you would be?**

Aloe vera for medicinal use!

- 11. If you could only have one cacti/succulent book to take with you to the desert island, what would it be?**

The New Cactus Lexicon.

- 12. What would be your favourite music album to take to the desert island?**

Difficult one this as most albums have a few good songs and lots of poorer ones! I like a lot of varied music so generally mix and match songs. Best of the Beatles compilation album I suppose if pushed for all round quality.

- 13. And finally, what would your luxury item be, to take with you to look after your cacti and succulent collection on the island?**

A very big fully kitted out toughened glass greenhouse with auto vents and shading to house the plants and me!

Thank you for your time and enjoy the warm and sunny tropical island!

Sue Wilson

Cash in the greenhouse

Have you cultivated and nurtured a plant or plants which are now too large, taking up precious shelf space in your greenhouse, and which every time you go into your greenhouse you think you would like to move them on, if you could only find a good home?

Or is there a plant you have just fallen out of love with, but is way too nice for the compost heap?

At the August meeting we will be experimenting by holding a plant auction. This is for medium to large healthy plants which fall into the criteria as above. If you bring a plant you can put a reserve price on it. Obviously plants should be named and labelled with your name. As this is a prototype the branch will take no commission.

It would be very useful if you could let me know if you plan to bring a plant or plants to this event. You can mail me at djengland@hotmail.co.uk

Dot England

Branch Committee Meeting

A branch committee meeting was held at Dot's on Wednesday 17th June.

The auditors had finalised the branch accounts for 2014, and these were discussed. The branch made a loss but this was mainly due to the additional expenses for the 60th Anniversary.

Recent meetings and events were discussed. The cultivation evening went well, with the plant swap considered to be a success.

Plans for the Branch Garden Party at Alice's and the New Forest Show were discussed.

The Branch Annual Dinner will be held at the Luzborough, on Friday 21st August.

Vinay Shah

Next Month's Meeting

The next meeting will be held on 4th August and will be our "Ask The Experts" Cultivation Masterclass. This will be a variation on our cultivation evening, with a number of experts invited to discuss specific topics with the audience.

The August Table Show will consist of the **Mammillaria Group (cacti)** and **Agave Group (succulents)** classes. 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. In addition there is a class for any flowering cactus or succulent plant.

The *Mammillaria* group includes *Bartschella*, *Cochemiea*, *Dolichothele*, *Krainzia*, *Mamilloopsis*, *Mammillaria*, *Mammilloidia*, *Pseudomammillaria* and *Solisia*.

The *Agave* Group includes *Agave*, *Beaucarnea*, *Calibanus*, *Dasyllirion*, *Dracaena*, *Furcraea*, *Hesperaloe*, *Hesperoyucca*, *Manfreda*, *Nolina*, and *Yucca*.

From 2015, the table show classes will now use the classifications from the *Guide to Shows 10th Edition*. (contact me if you need a copy of this)

Forthcoming Events

Sat 11 th	Jul	Isle of Wight	What I Did Last Winter (Paul Klaassen)
Sat 18 th	Jul	Portsmouth	Echinocereus (John Pilbeam)
Sun 26 th	Jul	Southampton	Southampton Branch Garden Party - hosted by Alice Jankovec
Tue 28 th	Jul-	Southampton	Display / Plant Sales @ New Forest Show, Brockenhurst
Thu 30 th			
Sat 1 st	Aug	Southampton	visit Oxford Branch Show: Old Mill Hall, Grove, Wantage OX12 7LB
Tue 4 th	Aug	Southampton	Ask The Experts – Cultivation Masterclass
Sat 8 th	Aug	Isle of Wight	Open Evening at Robin & Joan Goodredge (members only)
Sat 15 th	Aug	Portsmouth	No meeting
Fri 21 st	Aug	Southampton	Branch Dinner @ The Luzborough
Tue 1 st	Sep	Southampton	Cool Customers (Growing with minimal heating) – (John Hughes)
Sat 12 th	Sep	Southampton	Display / Plant Sales @ Romsey Show
Sat 12 th	Sep	Isle of Wight	The Tribe Rhipsalidae and its hybrids (Carl Bullock)
Sat 19 th	Sep	Portsmouth	Conophytums (Eddy Harris)
Sat 26 th	Sep	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Autumn Show @ Christ Church Hall, Widley, PO7 5BU

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

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/southamptonbcsc>