

British Cactus & Succulent Society

Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

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Editorial

The past month has gone by very quickly. Weather-wise we seem to have made up for the dry spell in May and June with numerous showers, in fact almost every day for the last couple of weeks!

The list of plants in flower in my conservatory is similar to that of last month. Because of the lower temperatures I've only watered every other week. Lots of my plants are looking tired and seem to need repotting but I just haven't had to time to do anything about it right now.

Announcements

It was good to see Margaret Corina at the July meeting. We had quite a high turnout for that meeting, no doubt attracted by the prospect of hearing a talk given by John Pilbeam.

The branch took part at the Solent Fuchsia Show and also the New Forest Show. Both went well, and I understand that plant sales at the New Forest Show were quite healthy.

Portsmouth & District Branch have now set a date for the **sale and auction of Brian Plunkett's collection** of plants. The sale will be held on Sunday 16th August at the home of Sandy Wooller. Her address is: 4 Second Avenue, Farlington, Portsmouth PO6 1JS. The sale will open at 10.30am for viewing and for the sale of the smaller plants which will be

individually priced. The auction of the best and larger plants will commence at 12 noon. Everyone is welcome. Payment must be made in cash only.

Last Month's Meeting

Plants of Interest

Bruce Beckerleg had brought along some *Plants of Interest*. First was *Aztekium hintonii* which he had managed to flower. This species was discovered relatively recently, in 1991. He had put aside *Sarcocaulon peniculinum* a week ago, thinking the branch meeting was last week. Fortunately, the pink flowers which had opened then had remained on the plant. *Adenium obesum* was a plant he had bought from a garden centre in 2002 – it forms attractive pink flowers. *Pterodiscus speciosus* forms a spherical caudex and has pink flowers. Finally, *Sarcocaulon vanderietiae* has white flowers and it makes a good candidate to grow as a bonsai.

The Genus Echeveria

Peter Down introduced John Pilbeam and mentioned that he first became acquainted with Echeverias some forty years ago, when our branch had organised a trip down to Bristol where a grower called Garnett Fuge (a specialist in Mammillarias) had a small greenhouse of Echeverias. Peter was amazed by the leaf colours and the different forms, including the carunculated types.

We had a technical hitch getting started with the digital presentation because the computer I normally use to handle digital talks at our meetings had opened the first page but then froze when moving to the next page. The problems were related to the size of John's powerpoint file (600MB+). I usually bring along a spare laptop which has a relatively uncluttered hard disk with fewer applications loaded. This was pressed into service, but it took a dozen minutes to copy across the presentation from John's memory stick, and during this time, John took a few questions from the audience.

John said he had been waiting for Mryon Kimnach to do a book on Echeverias since the 1980s, but about

five years ago, Myron suggested that John should be the author. Initially John thought there were 50-60 species to consider and the task wouldn't be too difficult, but after finding Eric Walther's book from 1972, he realised there were something like 140 taxa. He hadn't seen half of these so he started growing them and taking pictures. In addition Myron sent him a lots of plants. The book turned out weightier than he had expected at the start. It is published by the BCSS and currently they are around 300 sales short of breaking even.

John also told us about the trip he had to Mexico in the spring of this year. He was accompanied by David Neville and Derek Bowdery, and they stayed with a couple of expatriate Canadians who lived in Oaxaca. Americans Myron Kimmach and John Trager also accompanied them.

The plants are most common in Mexico, around the state of Oaxaca. The plants thin out as one heads north, and only one species (*E. strictiflora*) is found in the USA. They occur down through central America, and right down to the north of the countries in the central part of South America. The furthest south are found in Argentina, and there are some in Peru, Venezuela and Bolivia. By far the best place to see them is Oaxaca, where there are good hotels and it's relatively cheap to visit. Some of the species grow in the mountains at heights of 10000 feet. In these habitats, the rarefied atmosphere made his head swim. The species they found at this height was *Echeveria nebularum*.

Margaret asked why mealy bug liked these plants so much? John answered that they like places where they can hide. Using insecticides may affect the glaucous coating which some of the plants possess. Provado seemed to do the trick, but John mentioned that although it killed the mealy bugs in the rosette, the ones on the flower stems survived. He also mentioned that Provado has changed formulations and doesn't work as well now. Margaret mentioned that "Ultimate bug killer" from the same manufacturer seemed to work better.

Another person from the audience asked if there was anything else that would kill mealy bug? Years ago one used malathion but that's pretty dangerous to humans too. The insects have a wax around them and they also produce a wool which is difficult to permeate. Methalated spirits can be used but could mark the leaves. The best thing to do was keep infected plants away from others and try and re-propagate them using leaf cuttings – then throw the infected plant away. If you see mealy on the flower

stem, it's a good opportunity to get rid of them by just cutting off the stalk.

Like many things in life, the more beautiful they are, the more difficult they are. *E. lindsayana* / *E. colorata* are swines to root. However, if the plant starts to offset, then take off the small leaves from the young offsets - those seem to root well. With *E. cante* he tried taking off a bit of the stem attached to the leaf but that didn't work. If you are cutting the top off a plant - try and leave some leaves on the lower stem - that will help that part to survive and form new offsets.

When you have a tall leggy Echeveria - where do you cut it? Nearer the tip was best. There are some lanky types and the best thing is to grow them, let them flower and then just re-root the tips. When taking a cutting, find a piece of the stem which is bare and cut there. Let the piece which was cut off dry for a day or two. When roots start to appear, cover them with a light helping of sand – do not bury the stems until the cuttings have started to put on some growth.

As to which species were the hardest – the ones which come from higher altitudes tend to be tougher and the soft leaved ones are the least hardy. The hardest one is probably *E. glauca* and second *E. elegans*, or *E. agavoides*, although last year's harsh winter might have tested those.

Finally, the presentation had loaded and John was able to get started with his talk. The initial shot was of wall some 30-40 feet long mass planted with *Echeveria secunda* which was in flower. This was growing at 8000-9000 feet at Sierra Juarez. The wall had since collapsed but he believed it would be rebuilt.

Echeveria affinis is beautiful in cultivation and has almost black leaves. There are hybrids around with brown leaves. They make 5-6 inch rosettes. Next was *E. agavoides* with beautiful red markings on the leaf tips. It is a variable species and John recommended the cultivar 'Ebony' as a nice selection. We also saw *E. agavoides* cv. 'Maria', named after Myron's wife. This plant had coloured up beautifully in the Californian sun.

John mentioned most Echeverias can be left out on a wall in the summer – you will get good colour and it will also keep down the height of some of the lankier ones. *E. amphoralis* is named because of the likeness of the flowers to a greek urn. Take the tips off and restart every couple of years. *E. australis* hails from Costa Rica and Honduras and it grows epiphytically.

It forms clusters and flowers on every stem, although it becomes a bit of a mess after flowering. *E. bakeri* is a Bolivian species and he's found it difficult to grow and has never flowered it. *Echeveria bella* is a miniature – it forms masses of yellow flowers and then dies. *E. bifida* is one of the most widespread in Mexico. The featured plant was from Xichu. It's a cracking plant which clusters well. It has a lovely forked flower with beautiful cream and maroon colouring. *E. calycosa* is a plant which he constantly loses. He pointed out a slug pellet on one of the leaves in the picture. John mentioned some Echeverias want to lose their leaves in the winter, but one needs to water them occasionally during those months just to keep them ticking over the winter.

E. cante used to go under the name *E. subrigida* previously. It has powdery blue leaves which develop a red edge given enough sun. The eaves do not root easily (even those taken from the flower stem) and the best bet is to get two plants and produce seeds, which like all Echeveria seed are minute. You have to be careful what you sow them in but they germinates like cress within a week. One then has to careful to avoid damping off. We saw a picture of the flowers, which have a pink interior and farina on the sepals.

E. carminea has furry leaves and grows at a pace - it made 3 feet in 18 months and still kept growing without flowering. *E. carnicolor* has flashy pink leaves. If you have a 10x magnifying glass do examine the crystalline surface of the leaf. The flowers are reddish. During the trip to Mexico, they went to see *E. chazaroi* in habitat. Unfortunately the road at their habitat was being widened and one side of the road was being dug up and the soil was being dumped on the other side, hence killing plants on both sides. This destruction is hard to stomach. The leaves on the flower stem will root easily, but take the leaves off before the flowers start to form. The flowers have a lovely harebell shape.

E. chihuahensis forms a 5 inch plant and the leaves have red tips and edges. The flowers are red. Another plant which is large and has chunky leaves is *E. colorata* and this is a synonym for the plant distributed as *E. lindsayana*. The rosette can reach 6-7 inches across. John mentioned that in general, the thicker the leaf, the harder the time the plant has in the wild so this is a clue that one should go easier on the watering. *E. cuencaensis* is from South America and has pinkish flowers. This was the real one - there is another type in circulation under the same name which is a different plant. *E. cuspidata* var *cuspidata* forms rosettes 5 inches and will cluster given time. There are some varieties, namely v. *zaragozae* and v.

gemmula which is smaller. The latter has rosettes 3" across, and the leaves have a dark tip.

If you like big plants, then *E. dactylifera* grows a foot across. It has beautiful colouring given enough light and forms a 3 foot flower spike. *E. derenbergii* is ideal for beginners and the rosettes are 2" across – it clusters quickly and can easily fill a 6-7" pan. It forms short flower spikes with yellow flowers and has been used in hybridizing. Ivor Biddlecombe mentioned that he had been to a nursery where *E. 'Worfield Wonder'* was being grown in large quantities.

If you want to plant one in the garden, then *E. elegans* is suitable. The illustrated plant was a nice form with thick leaves. It can assume a purplish colour with enough sun, and also has a slightly offset centre. There are several variants which go under the names of *E. albicans* and *E. potosina*. *E. eurichlamys* grows at altitudes of several thousand feet in Peru and it forms quite thick leaves held closely. However, cultivation in the UK with lower light levels and at sea level changes its appearance considerably - it becomes more open and the leaves are thinner. *E. fimbriata* has a slight rageddy edge to leaf and it forms chunky rosettes on tall stems, with a lovely colour. To propagate, cut the stem and lay it on some sandy compost and you'll get plants forming along the length.

E. fulgens is a large growing plant - 8 to 10" across and tends to remain solitary. *E. gibbiflora* can grow 1 foot across and varies in colour but it does not have as much character as some of the other species, although cv. 'Metallica' is worth looking out for. There are forms with carunculate leaves which have strange growths on the leaves and these have been used a lot in hybridizing.

E. gigantea had grown to 8-9" across and yet was only 2 years old from seed. The plants make fibrous roots and one needs to pot them on at least every two years. A specimen used for the illustration at the end of his book was 12-15" across. *E. globulosa* may possibly be a hybrid. The rosettes are 3-4 inches across and the plant seems to have something of *derenbergii* in it.

E. grisea from Mexico is superficially similar to *E. gigantea* with its large leaves, but it starts flopping around as it grows. In nature it's a sprawling plant and tends to lie down. It is difficult to grow and keep looking good. *E. guatemalensis* grows as an epiphyte. He would have liked to go down to Guatemala to see the plant in habitat, but it's a pretty dangerous country to visit right now.

E. halbingeri comes in 2 varieties - var *sanchez mejoradae* has green and pink flowers whereas var. *halbingeri* has orange flowers. He couldn't see how the same species would have different flowers. The latter seems more difficult to propagate.

E. harmsii is a untidy plant but has the biggest flowers in the genus and is worth growing for that. *E. helmutiana* was pictured growing in the expat's collection and it was sending up tall stems. In the wild it grows on sheer rock faces and the rosettes are 1.5 inches across. We saw it growing amongst rocks and lichen and John said it was quite wet. He has managed to root some leaves.

E. heterosepala has been chucked back and forth between *Echeveria* and *Pachyphytum* and the flowers are coloured green. It grows in flat and sandy areas in Oaxaca. *E. humilis* grows in almost impossible conditions in sheer rock and the next picture showed the plant growing in his greenhouse. John mentioned it is always worth propagating a few extra plants for insurance.

For *E. juarezensis* we saw a picture provided by a contemporary of Eric Walthers. The next slide showed what they found when searching for this in habitat, with quite different forms of leaves and flower stems. Based on the locality, John called it cv. "Cumbre". Next we saw a plant which *isn't* in John's book - named *Echeveria kymnachi*, the flowers suggested it is probably a graptopetallum. This means Myron has lost the chance of having an *Echeveria* named after him, since this name now cannot be reused even if it was initially applied to an invalid plant.

If you only grow one member of the genus, then *Echeveria laui* is worth considering. It never suffers from mealy bug because the farina is too thick for them to penetrate, although John mentioned it might get mealy if grown too lush. He advised only watering from a saucer below the pot since it can rot off easily. it is best propagated from the flower stem leaves. We saw a view of a greenhouse in Mexico where thousands of these were being propagated with a view to replacing plants lost in the wild. We also saw *Echeveria quincatalana* and a *pachyphytum* which was also being propagated with a view to being re-established in the wild.

E. leucotricha has tiny little hairs on the spur-like leaves. It makes a nice bonsai tree. We saw *E. lilacina* growing on sheer rock surfaces in northern Mexico. It can reach 6-8" in cultivation and is grown by the 1000s in Holland. *E. longissima* has long-tubed flowers but he found it dies suddenly and

doesn't have it any more. The variety *E. longissima* v. *aztatensis* is easier to grow. It has smaller leaves and more leaves per rosette, and we saw beautiful long flowers with recurved tips.

Next was a species which may now be lost. *E. lozanoi* has been looked for on three occasions and not been found. It may be totally wiped out, although there is a lady in Australia who may still have a plant. We saw *E. lutea* at 18 months from seed, forming the beginnings of flower spikes. The plant went on to produce three spikes and bore beautiful yellow flowers. It is from San Luis Potosi. *E. lyonsii* was discovered by accident by Gary Lyons, and John mentioned he is now cultivating this. It is another one for Valentines day - we saw a branching flower spike where the tips are arched to form the shape of a heart.

A plant from Sierra Juarez was identified as *E. megacalyx*. It has tiny flowers which are 1/4" across with incredibly large sepals. *E. minima* looks best when grown tight and hard. *E. moranii* was a plant which he didn't find in the wild - perhaps it dries up and is hard to spot. In any case it's difficult to grow. The brilliant red flowers come out on a sideways stalk, so perhaps this species is pollinated by ground beetles.

E. multicaulis comes from Guerrero, down in the South West of Mexico. You don't see it much these days. *E. nayaritensis* has purplish leaves and comes from Nayarit which is also in the South West of Mexico. *E. nebularum* is found at 10000 feet and it must wonder what we are trying to do to it when it's being cultivated at sea level. We saw it growing high up on the trunk of a tree. John mentioned that the area was also difficult to get to.

E. nodulosa cv 'Painted Beauty' was a selected variety with wider / larger leaves which are more regular than the basic species. *E. olivacea* is an epiphyte and had a typical flower stem growing up vertically from the centre of the plant. *E. oreophila* from Peru is a chunky grower and pretty if you like glaucous leaves. *E. pallida* has never been found in the wild but can be found growing in Mexico City and may come from Chiapas. The featured plant was a colour break with bright green leaves. The species has been used in hybridizing. The rosette was 5-6 inches across and John said it would get larger. The flowers are pink.

E. peacockii is a nice plant and another which Myron claims is the same species is *E. subsessilis*. *E. penduliflora* is a small species coming back into cultivation. In habitat, on the other side of the road

were plantations of *Agave tequiliana*. They went looking for *E. pinetorum* which is deciduous. He didn't expect to find it growing in March, but they did come across some examples. Next was *E. pruinata*. Myron went down on a rope to photograph this, put his foot on what he thought was a ledge which turned out to be a root and gave way. Below was a 900 metre drop, luckily he was attached to a rope.

E. pulvinata has felty leaves and tiny hairs covering the surface. *E. pulvinata* cv. 'Ruby' is a selected form, and there are some nice hybrids around. *E. purpurascens* is very slow and easy to identify due to its unique form. Both in the wild and at home the plant is solitary and produces a rosette around 4" inches across. The leaf tips tend to dry up, and you'll rarely see a clump of this.

The next species, *E. racemosa* is "iffy" – it grows quite beautifully initially but then the leaves die back. It has red/pink flowers. Variety *citrina* has yellow flowers but has the same habit. It also wants to lose its leaves in the winter. He doesn't really recommend it although he had quite a few to sell so perhaps he shouldn't be saying that. *E. recurvata* comes from Venezuela and it is one of the more worthwhile South American species. It is prolific with its yellow flowers. *E. rosea* is epiphytic, and the picture was taken in habitat in Guanajuato. A tree was shading the plant and flash had to be used. In cultivation it colours up in good light. The epiphytic flowers are arranged rather like bottle brush.

E. rubromarginata is a chunky plant with rosettes 5-6" across. It sends up spikes 3 feet tall and then dies. Chop off the flower spike, and if you're lucky you may get some offsets. *E. runyonii* has beautiful flowers, and the flower stem bifurcates, and we again had a Valentines heart shape. There is a form of this plant with the leaves twisted and arranged as if they were backwards – this is known as *E. runyonii* "Topsy Turvy".

E. secunda can be grown outside. Some clones might be marked FO 211 – if so, hang on to this since it has lovely chunky leaves and forms 4-5" inch. rosettes. *E. sesseliflora* has a felty leaf which is velvety to the touch. It forms a big rosette. The flowers have blue sepals and pink petals and are very pretty on what is otherwise an ugly plant. It grows in tropical/humid conditions in Chiapas.

E. setosa is well known in cultivation and it has a number of varieties. We saw *E. setosa* v *setosa* and also the varieties *rundelli*, *minor* and *oteroi*. The flower is common to the different varieties. Variety

minor has cambridge blue rosettes with bristles on the leaves and *E. setosa* v *oteroi* has no bristles.

E. shaviana is beautiful. It was initially thought to be a cultivar with its crinkly leaves. The leaves from on the flower stem root easily and it forms a classic shepherd's crook flower stalk. *E. simulans* is somewhat similar to *E. secunda* but it is a different species and the flower is different. It can form both regular and irregular leaves. *E. skinneri* is a real weed and needs to be grown outside to develop good colouring.

We saw a picture of John Trager and Derek Bowdery considering a drink of tequila at a "roadside establishment". It seemed like the owner had already partaken of a drink or two. John described the smell as being a cross between a brewery and a cowshed. We also saw Myron Kimmach (who is aged 83) having fun giving someone a push on a swing.

Moving on, at Laguna Encantada, they found *E. subcorymbosa*. *E. subrigida* is easy to grow and can get quite big, sometimes exceeding a foot. Derek Bowdery grew some from seed and they were large enough after just two years to be sold for £15. *E. tencho* is from Chiapas and also central America – it is an epiphyte and the flowers are pastel shades. *E. tolimanensis* is a choice species covered in heavy meal but it can get mealy bug which is then hard to extricate from in between the chunky leaves. The rosette leaves root readily.

E. turgida was rediscovered in the wild recently by Martin Kristen and Julia Etter and he now has a plant in cultivation and is hoping to propagate it. We saw a picture of it at 2 inches across. *E. uhlii* is named after Professor Charles Uhl and comes from Oaxaca. When dry, the outer leaves surround the inner leaves and give it the appearance of a Greenovia. He prefers to leave the outer leaves on since it adds to the character of the plant. He has had it for 5 years and it's slow growing.

A picture of *E. unguiculata* suggested violet colouring which John said was an artefact and not natural. The name suggests it is supposed to resemble a monkey's claw, but they did not find it in habitat. *E. utubambensis* is a Peruvian species which is a sprawling plant which prefers to grow in a hanging basket. *E. valvata* dries up completely in the winter and waits for the spring rains before re-emerging. The example we saw had also been half eaten by something!

John ended the talk with a picture of him on a goat track which ended in nowhere – he wondered where

the goat would have jumped to. It was a reminder of the difficult terrain that they sometimes had to traverse in order to find these plants.

Peter ended the session by thanking John for telling us about this beautiful plants and for risking his life by going to such places. He remarked how it was always great to get out and see how plants grew in habitat.

Vinay Shah

Table Show Results

There were 15 entries in the table show at the July meeting.

	Cacti – Echinopsis Group	Succulents – Aloe Group
Open	(1) T Grech Echinopsis kermesina	(1) J Roskilly Aloe erinacea
	(2) B Beckerleg Soehrensia grandis	(2) J Burnay Aloe peglerae
	(3) –	(3) B Beckerleg Aloe deltoideodonta
Intermediate	(1) B Beckerleg Acanthocalycium spiniflorum	(1) B Beckerleg Aloe haworthiodes
	(2) –	(2) J Burnay Aloe Africana
	(3) –	(3) J Roskilly Aloe descoingsii

Ivor Biddlecombe

Committee Meeting

A Committee Meeting was held on the 20th July, at Peter Down's.

It will soon be time to think of putting together next year's programme of events. **If you have any thoughts about speakers we should invite, or topics you want to learn about, please have a word with David Neville.**

The open day held by Keith and Kathy Flanagan was appreciated, and Peter mentioned he had sent them a letter of thanks on behalf of our branch. A total of 17 people attended the branch dinner. It was suggested that perhaps the dinner should be moved to another day of the week - the restaurants would be less busy and we might get better service on a day other than Friday. It was also discussed whether we should hold two dinners a year.

In October, we will have guest speakers from Brazil and Chile speaking at the branch. They have also been booked to speak at neighbouring branches (Portsmouth, Reading), and David Neville was trying to find out whether they could offer a choice of talks so that we could avoid duplication.

A new *Gymnocalycium* book written by Graham Charles has been published. The committee had a show of hands and agreed to purchase this for the branch library.

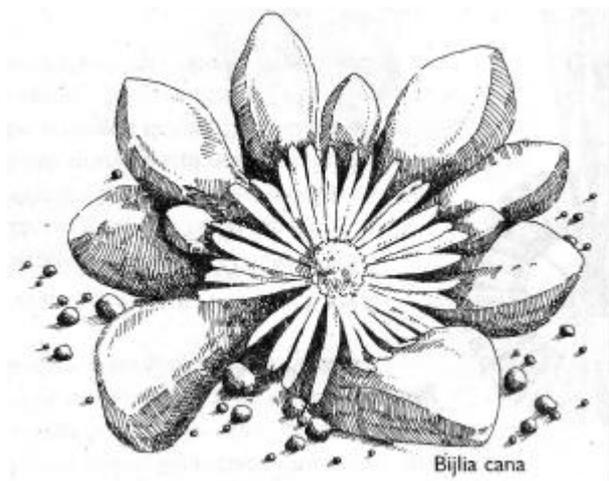
The branch had recently put on a display at the Solent Fuchsia show. The Saturday went reasonably well, but Sunday was very slow. Preparations for the New Forest show were discussed. The organisers had only sent us one car park pass so more had been requested. It was hoped these would arrive in time to distribute them to everyone who was helping at the show. Looking forwards to next year, there was also some discussion about other local shows or events that the branch could consider taking part in.

The 2009 Zone 11 Quiz would be hosted at Portsmouth in October. The Isle of Wight branch will host the 2010 Quiz, and they were trying to select a suitable date.

Vinay Shah

Snippets

Below is the second of Ian Acton's articles for the newsletter. The illustration is from a pamphlet which Ian provided.



The Strange Tale of *Bijlia Dilatata* (nee *Cana*)

Imagine a small town founded in 1762 on the strength of a gold rush that never was. The raised wooden sidewalks are still there. The saloon has become a respectable hotel offering comfortable accommodation in modern en-suite rooms behind the original facade. The single wide street has been paved over, and horses have given way to motor vehicles. The place was renamed Prince Albert in 1845 in honour of Queen Victoria's consort, and so it remains. The social highlight is the Womens Institute market held outside the town hall (inside if wet) every Saturday morning where the few residents meet the even fewer visitors over coffee, even if they are not in the mood for buying.

Prince Albert is located in a valley in the Swartberg Mountains in the Great Karoo Desert region of South Africa. In 1930, a Mrs Deborah Susanna van der Bijl collected a succulent plant locally which she added to her collection. Some four years later and anxious to know the name, she sent a sample to the Kirstenbosch National Botanical garden in Cape Town, where the now renowned N E Brown recognised it both as a new genus and a new species. He named it *Bijlia cana* in her honour.

The story does not end there. For some reason which I do not understand, the plant was given the new name of *Bijlia dilatata* in 1992. The change has been recognised by the National Botanical Institute of South Africa. Then in 1995, Steve Hammer (of *Conophytum* and *Lithops* fame) proposed a second species, *Bijlia tugwelliae*, although this has not been

listed by the National Botanical Institute on their data base.

The genus *Bijlia* falls in the same group of Mesembs as *Glottiphyllum* and a few other genera. They make small clumps of asymmetrical keeled yellowish-white leaves, which turn slightly pinkish when stressed by drought or heat. The flowers are bright yellow similar to *Glottiphyllum* and open in the late afternoon. However their natural habitat is warmer and drier, and this makes cultivation somewhat more tricky than for *Glottiphyllum*. Propagation is either from seed or division of established clumps.

Ian Acton

Open Day

On July 11th, a number of our members took up the offer to visit Keith and Kathy Flanagan's collection. They live in the village of Overton, which is around 20 miles north east of Winchester.

I got a lift with David Neville and as we passed through the village of Overton, we noticed that every pub or hotel had a scarecrow tied to its front! Some scarecrows had been put onto telegraph poles and others were positioned in people's windows. When we got to the Flanagans, they explained that a Scarecrow Festival was due to be held in the village in a few days time. (You can view a youtube video of this at : <http://tinyurl.com/overton-2009>)

They have a single large greenhouse, and several plants such as agaves were planted outside. In their garden was a South African Leopard tortoise with black and yellow markings. These do not hibernate and have to be kept indoors in the winter. As each year passes and the tortoise gets larger, Kathy said it becomes more and more of a struggle to carry it up the stairs.

Out in their garden there was a very nice collection of Japanese maples. I lost count but there must have been thirty to forty different forms, leaf shapes or colours to admire. Keith explained that the oldest of these were only around 10 years old and that all had originally been bought as small trees, at a size you'd find at most garden centres.

The cacti collection was housed in the large greenhouse and there were some superb plants in there. It housed an excellent collection of mammillarias and related genera, and also groups of other plants, such as sulcorebutias. There were many choice plants and plenty of these were an impressive size or in excellent condition – or often both!

All in all, it was an enjoyable afternoon out, and I am sure all members who came along found something to admire and inspire.

Vinay Shah

Next Month's Meeting

The next meeting will be held on September 1st and will feature John Ede talking about "Plants from A to Z". This is rather open-ended so you'll just have to come along to find out which species he talks about.

The September table show will consist of the **Gymnocalycium group** (cacti) and the **Haworthia and Gasteria groups** (succulents). Please note that members are allowed to submit more than one entry in any of the classes, and that points will be earned for each placed entry.

The Gymnocalycium Group includes *Gymnocalycium*, *Brachycalycium* and *Neowerdermannia*.

The Haworthia and Gasteria groups contain *Haworthia*, *Astroloba*, *Chortolirion*, *Poellnitzia* and *Gasteria*.

Forthcoming Events

Tue	4 th	Aug	Southampton	Succulents of South Africa (Alice Vanden Bon)
Sat	15 th	Aug	Portsmouth	No meeting
Fri	21 st	Aug	Isle of Wight	Open Afternoon @ Robin Goodredge, Coverack, East Cowes Rd
Tue	1 st	Sep	Southampton	Cacti & Succulents from A to Z (John Ede)
Fri	18 th	Sep	Isle of Wight	Little Karoo (Rodney Sims)
Sat	19 th	Sep	Portsmouth	Talks from Marlon Machado and Florencia Senoret
Mon	21 st	Sep	Southampton	Committee Meeting
Sat	26 th	Sep	Portsmouth	Autumn Show @ Christ Church Hall, Widley, Waterlooville
Tue	6 th	Oct	Southampton	Talks from Marlon Machado and Florencia Senoret
Sat	17 th	Oct	Portsmouth	Zone 11 Quiz

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