

British Cactus & Succulent Society

Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

October 2009



Branch Secretary

David Neville
6 Parkville Road
Swaythling
Southampton
Hampshire
SO16 2JA
davnev@btopenworld.com
(023) 80551173 or
07974 191354

Newsletter Editor

Vinay Shah
29 Heathlands Road
Eastleigh
Hampshire
SO53 1GU
vvshah@clara.co.uk
(023) 80261989

Editorial	1
Announcements.....	1
Last Month's Meeting.....	1
Plants of Interest.....	1
Cacti & Succulents from A to Z.....	1
Table Show Results	6
August Meeting.....	7
Succulents of South Africa	7
Branch Committee meeting.....	8
Forthcoming Events.....	8
Next Month's Meeting	8

Editorial

September has gone by quickly. The weather has been quite pleasant, but the temperatures are now beginning to drop and it will soon be time to turn on the central heating.

In my conservatory, several of the mesembs are in flower. There have also been flowers on some of the other succulents. Earlier on, some of the later flowering cacti such as *Borzicactus samaipatanus* did put on a bit of a show.

Announcements

Thank you to all those who attended the Sales day at Margaret Corina's at the start of last month. Over 20 people came along and several plants were bought and hence re-housed. However, given the large size of the collection, there were still a lot of plants left at the end of the day.

The **Zone 11 Quiz** will be hosted by Portsmouth branch on Saturday 17th October. Each branch needs to have a team of three people to answer the questions and supporters will also be most welcome. The venue is St. Colman's Church Hall in Cosham (PO6 2JJ). The Portsmouth meetings start at a similar time to ours (7:00pm for a 7:30pm start). For those who have not been to Portsmouth meetings before, there are maps on the front table. Please let David Neville know if you plan to attend.

Last Month's Meeting

Plants of Interest

Ivor Biddlecombe had brought along several plants from the genus *Gymnocalycium*. The main feature was an 8" diameter specimen of *G. reductum* which was around 20 years old. This was producing offsets from the stem rather than the base of the plant. *Echinocereus* do this but it's very unusual for a *Gymnocalycium*. Paul Klaassen suggested that we keep quiet about this plant – if Nigel Taylor found out, the genus might have to be revised. By contrast, *G. hossei* was behaving normally, with offsets growing round the base.

The other *Gymnocalycium* plants included *G. erinaceum*, *G. oenanthemum*, *G. carminanthum*, *G. quehlanum*, *G. bayrianum*. *G. riojense* had a brown epidermis and was growing very flat – it is quite a variable species. *G. stellatum* and *G. baldianum albiflora* were both in bud. Ivor mentioned that altogether he had around 60 different species of *Gymnocalycium*.

The other item on the table was a print of a photograph which John Cox (of Leeds Branch) had sent me. This was probably taken in the 1960s or 1970s and it showed a Ford motor car which had been crushed thanks to a rather large saguaro having fallen on top of it!

Cacti & Succulents from A to Z

John Ede started his talk by saying that at his age, three things go - the first was his memory and he couldn't remember the other two. He said perhaps the title of the talk was ill-advised – have just heard Ivor talk about some *Gymnocalyciums*, there weren't any featured in his talk!

The pictures he was going to show would be of plants in his collection and also ones he had taken while visiting places such as Chile, New Zealand, USA and South Africa. We started with *Aloe dichotoma* - one of the finest plants in South Africa. He had been there several times and these plants sometimes look tatty but on this occasion it had

rained and the plants looked very good. *Aloe longistyla* has a short flower spike and the plant itself was 8-9" across. He found *Aloe melanacantha* growing in huge clumps some 15 to 20 feet across, and the plants were colouring up nicely. *Aloe plicatilis* has a different form of growth, the leaves being arranged in a fan shape. The red flowers are lovely - his plant is 30 years old and is about 3 feet tall.

He found *Adromischus* near Harras in the north of South Africa. The featured plant had knobbly leaves. John mentioned that this genus is easy to propagate – just take a leaf off the plant. The wound will heal within minutes and the leaf should root fairly quickly. *Adromischus phillipsiae* is unusual in that it is the only member of the genus which has flowers which hang down - the others are upright.

Astrophytum asterias is also known as the sea-urchin cactus due to its shape and pattern. The Japanese have developed selected clones and we saw cv. 'Super Kabuto' photographed adjacent to a regular *A. asterias*. Some of the hybrids are fabulous plants, but they are often also accompanied by fabulous prices. We saw many *Astrophytums* growing well in a nursery in New Zealand, including an *Astrophytum myriostigma* with a rare shape and colour. We also saw an *Adenium* which has nice flowers, but John mentioned every part of the plant is poisonous.

An *Acanthocalycium* had a slate grey body and superb 6" yellow flowers. He had grown it from Edgar Lamb's seed in the 70s. *Aztekium ritteri* is very slow growing – he had the featured plant since the 1970s, and it shows imperceptible growth but it does flower every year so he assumed that it is still alive. We also saw *Aztekium hintonii*. This is a relatively recent discovery from Mexico, and the plants imported in the early days were quite tatty but they eventually grew into nice plants. It is quite slow from seed..

Anacampseros comptonii is one of the smallest in this genera. It, only grows to an inch across. We also saw *Anacampseros rhodesica* from Zimbabwe. This is hard to find these days. The small and inconspicuous white flowers smell disgusting. *Anacampseros scopata* is one of the smaller members, and they found it some 15 years ago in a shady spot in the Augrabies mountain range in South Africa. The tiny plants are difficult to grow and keep silvery in cultivation. *Anacampseros papyracea* was found near the Orange River in SA, in a sandy area where the plants are partially covered. This land has been bought by a diamond mining company so it is likely to get bulldozed away in the new few years.

They also found plants of *Anacampseros alstonii* which were 7" across and fantastic specimens in beautiful condition. These can have either red or white flowers – in habitat these grow about 150 miles apart.

Agave victoria reginae was pictured growing in South Africa. The weather there allows many plants to be grown outdoors all year round. Next was *Acharagma aguirreana* which has previously been placed in *Turbinicarpus* and *Escobaria*. It's a wonderful looking plant with a huge tap root, but if you overwater it, it will die. *Austrocactus patagonius* is from southern Argentina - if you water it grows upright and doesn't flower, but if you leave it alone it grows pendent and produces wonderful 2" flowers.

Ariocarpus fissuratus is a plant which he flowered from seed in 17 years. He found the form *lloydii* in 1993, in the Big Bend National Park in Texas. An old lady of around 90 advised them to take whatever plants they found, explaining that a road was going to be put through there in the following week. They rescued a few items, put them in a cardboard box and sent them home in a box addressed to the "Reverend Dean" and marked as church hymn books. Every single one made it home. This is probably not advisable these days!

Borzicactus samaipatanus has wonderful red flowers with purple anthers. *Borzicactus sextonianus* forms joints. He entered this in a show in Stevenage but by the time he got there he found he had 37 separate plants! The plant has recovered now. It forms a typical *Borzicactus* flower.

Brachystelma nanum has a gorgeous star shaped flower which doesn't smell. *Brachystelma stellatum* has 5 lobed flowers and there are green or yellow forms. *Brachystelma barberae* is recommended. His mother-in-law picked it up when in flower and remarked "what a wonderful flower" - she then proceeded to take a sniff and was speechless for a very long time. This species is quite hard to get hold of these days.

One of the smallest plants you're likely to encounter is *Blossfeldia liliputana* which grows to an inch or so. He had one which had remained in a two inch pot for 20 years, there were finally a couple of offsets coming through. *Cintia* is a small genus allied to *Rebutia* – it has a huge tap root and if you overwater it, it splits.

Next were some *Copiapoas*. He went to Chile with Paul Klaassen in 2001. *Copiapoa longistaminea* was growing in a dry area but the plants were in superb

condition. This was near Mount Perales. They also found *C. cinerea*. Some of the plants were amazing. They found clumps consisting of plants with and without spines, and concluded that 2-3 plants were growing together in a tight group. They also found many plants in the San Ramon valley. He is proud of his plant of *Copiapoa krainziana*, which flowers regularly. He mentioned that when he takes his photos he uses aquarium gravel around the base of the plant to hide the pot. John Pilbeam detests this! They found more large plants of *C. longistaminea*. The plants were beginning to sag in the middle – it was very dry and perhaps they were unable to support their own weight. There was another huge plant of *C. cinerescens*. Some of these plants were growing within spitting distance of the Pacific Ocean. *C. esmeraldana* grows very small and it is hard to believe that it is in the same family as the huge clumps we had just seen. *C. laui* is also tiny and one had to blow the grit off to see the plant. It looks better in cultivation than it does in habitat.

Ceropegia armandii's stems resemble lizard skin. The flowers are weird and he wondered what insect pollinates it. The hairs on the flower wave around in a breeze and maybe this is designed to attract insects. Next was an unnamed *Ceropegia* with a weird flower. With *Coryphantha*, a majority of the species have yellow flowers. The featured plant was *C. micromeris*, which comes from Mexico although the picture was taken in South Africa. It has a large tap root and pink flowers. *Coryphantha pectinata* has a yellow flower and neat spines.

Next was a *Cereus* and one of the most beautiful plants he'd seen. It was growing in a collection in New Zealand and was around 8 feet tall. Maybe it was an *azureocereus*. David thought it was an abnormal form and that normally it would have more spines. We saw an overall shot of the collection. These plants belonged to Stan Benbow, who emigrated from the UK in 1964.

At Shielams Nursery in South Africa he had photographed *Cyphostemma juttae*. *Conophytum burgeri* is one of the newer species – if you peel of the old skin, the new body has a wonderful red colour for a couple of weeks before it goes green again. *Conophytum hammeri* is named after Steven Hammer, but it happens to have a ridiculous little flower. His *Conophytum ernstii* now fills a 5 inch pan and looks gorgeous when in flower. We also saw *Conophytum herreanthus*, *Conophytum pearsonii* and *Conophytum klinghardtense*. *Conophytum stephanii* is covered in fine hairs. In habitat it grows with no soil just on rock - probably the only moisture it gets is fogs rolling in from the sea.

We saw *Crassula columnaris* growing in habitat in South Africa. Once they flower, they die but they produce enough seed to keep them going. We saw the tiny *Crassula comptonii* at Van Rhyn's pass, at a place called Compton's Corner. There's also an *Anacampseros* and a *Conophytum* named after Professor Compton. *Chieridopsis peculiaris* grows only in a small area which is no more than three times the size of our hall. Thanks to Derek Tribble, he found it and it was in full flower.

"D" is for *Dinteranthus pole-evansii* – the picture showed how the plant and the surrounding quartz nullify each other. *Discocactus horstii* was imported by the thousands in the 80s. Unfortunately it is loved by mealy bug. We saw a *Dorstenia* flower made up of 100s of smaller flowers. The seeds pop out 2 feet away from the parent. *Dorstenia hildebrandtii* has spider-like flowers and a large tuberous root, but for nine months of the year there's nothing in the pot.

In South Africa, he spent three hours on his knees looking for *Diplosoma retroversum*. It is almost impossible to grow in this country. *Didymaotus lapidiformis* looks very nice in the wild. It grows in a very small area, in ground which looks like a field of builder's rubble.

They found *Echinocereus fendleri* in New Mexico. It had a gorgeous flower colour. He collected a piece of it and grew it on for 10 years but then it faded away. *Echinocereus cucumis* has no spines on the plant, we saw two forms of flower in the picture. *Echinocereus pectinatus* has neat coloured spines giving a rainbow appearance. It has lovely flowers which appear 2-3 times a year. *E. dasyacanthus* has yellow flowers. *E. viereckii* ssp. *morricalii* is a spineless form and forms a 6-7 inch flower. *Echinocereus salm-dyckianus* has been around in cultivation for 200 years. It has a gorgeous flower. Be careful of its spines which seems to pierce quite deeply.

His plant of *Echeveria laui* now has 4 heads and flowers throughout the year. It is difficult to keep clean but is a lovely plant. *Escobaria henricksonii* was found by Lau. It has a large tuberous root and finger like appendages and forms a ring of flowers. *Echinomastus mariposensis* has weird khaki coloured flowers. It was now in a 6 inch pot. It has a large tap root. *Epithelantha micromeris* looks like it is coated in cake icing. Considering where they grow, it has amazing dainty flowers.

Euphorbia piscidermis has fish-like scales cover the plant. It is easier than some of the other plants from Ethiopia. *Euphorbia abdelkuri* is fairly easy to root from cuttings but it seems to always die after 10-15

years. It has very poisonous sap. With *Euphorbia susannae*, you can just about see the top of the plant and nothing else. It grows in areas amongst pieces of quartz. *Euphorbia tuberosa* is found over a fair area. It has a large tap root and does not like being transplanted. *Euphorbia eustacei* was growing under some wire netting - half the plant was on one side and half on the other.

Echinocactus horzonthalonius grows in Texas. His plant was 5 inches across when it first flowered. We saw *E. ingens* growing at Shielams in South Africa – this comes from Mexico. *Echinocactus grusonii* (mother-in-law's cushion) was also pictured in South Africa, as was *Espostoa melanostele*. The position of the vertical pseudocephalium tells you which way the sun shines. They found Eriosyce in the Fray Jorge national park, north of Santiago. It was very dry but the plants were in wonderful condition. Growing fairly close was *Eulychnia iquiquensis*, and we saw buds, flowers and seed pods all on one plant.

Fenestraria rhopalophylla (Baby's toes) was found growing at the same place as the *Anacampseros* featured earlier. *Ferocactus stainesii* or maybe *F. pilosus* was pictured growing in South Africa. The plants of *Geohintonia mexicana* imported a few years ago were generally tatty but seedlings have gone on to form nice plants which are also spicier than the habitat plants. It has quite a nice flower.

Haworthia emelyae is a lovely plant, with variable markings on the leaves. We also saw *Haworthia koelmaniorum* growing in habitat. *H. pumila* was found near the town of Robertson – it has white pimples on the leaves. He grows *Hoya multiflora* in his bathroom – it has a wonderful flower, but this drips masses of nectar which tends to a mess. They found Hoodia in South Africa – the flowers have a revolting smell which attracted dozens of blow flies. *Lithops marmorata* weren't as easy to find as *Conophytums*, but once you find one, you find hundreds. They found *L. localis* growing in an area half the size of our meeting hall and packed with plants. We saw *Lophocereus schottii* growing in a cactus garden at Graaff Reinet in South Africa. Apparently in America the native Indians used to comb their hair with the spines of this plant! With *Leuchtenbergia principis* – as soon as the buds form, give it lots of water otherwise the buds will abort. *Lophophora williamsii* sells for amazing prices on Ebay. We also saw a form of *Lobivia densipina* which had been found by Lau. It has flower colours which range from white to deep purple, and the plant has a taproot.

Monadenium mafingensis forms a large tuber which he described as resembling an old boot. It has tiny flowers which are followed by a few leaves. *Matucana paucicostata* has hairy flower tubes. It is sometimes considered a Borzicactus. *Matucana aureiflora* puts on a lovely show of flowers in April and May and it's now in a 12 inch pan. *Matucana oreodoxa* has an untypical flower. It has a large tuberous root and doesn't like too much water. We also saw *Matucana weberbaueri*. *Melocactus matanzanus* comes from Cuba. It is fairly easy to grow and found in garden centres. In New Zealand it is so much easier to grow them. We saw a display of *Melocactus* and the majority of these were found by the Horst and Uebelmann expeditions of the 1960s, so there was something like 25-30 years of growth on some of these plants. *Muiria hortenseae* grows in only two specific places in the world, neither as big as this hall. The majority of the plants had been damaged by some piercing insect.

Mammillaria theresae was discovered in the 1960s and it has superb flowers. *Mammillaria lenta* is difficult to get to a large size - his was in a 6" pot. We saw a crested form of *Mammillaria longiflora* which he found a few years ago. *Mammillaria solisoides* buds up in November and December, and if we then get a nice March a couple of the flowers may open early in the year. We saw the *Mammillaria glassii* form called *ascensionensis* – this was found by Lau, and it has flowers which are much bigger than the normal *glassii*. *M. napina* has a large tuberous root and only has to be watered about three times a year. A form of *Mammillaria lasiacantha* found by Stephen Brack and labelled SB500 has wonderful plumose spines. *M. longimamma* has huge flowers which have a lemon scent. *M. hernandezii* flowers late in the year. *M. luthelyi* is perhaps the best of the best. It was found many years ago then lost but has since been rediscovered. It makes a glorious show with its magenta flowers. *Mammilopsis senilis* also makes a spectacular show. It seems to need a cold winter and good light in the winter months to put on a display of red flowers in the following summer.

Neowerdermannia vorwerkii has a rather insignificant flower but a very large tap root so it doesn't need much water through the year. They found *Neoporteria subgibbosa* growing in habitat, very close to the Pacific Ocean, in no soil whatsoever. With *Neoporteria esmeraldana* it was possible to just see the growing tip of the plant, the rest was buried in sand and shale. *Neoporteria multicolor* has spines which range from pure white to jet black and every colour in between. *Ortegocactus macdougallii* is hard to keep from growing brown

eventually, although it's a nice shade of pale green in its early years. John showed a picture of an *Opuntia* found in a dried up valley in Chile - Paul Klaassen said it was probably a North American species. We saw *Pachycereus pringlei* growing in Graaff Reinet in South Africa - there is a fabulous collection of plants there. *Pachycereus marginatus* at Shielams was 15 to 16 feet tall and virtually every areole had a flower. *Pilosocereus pachycladus* had been planted out in New Zealand in 1970 and after 30 years had reached a size of 15 feet tall and 18 feet across. *Pilosocereus fulvilanatus* was 4 feet across and 7 feet tall. We also saw *Pachypodium lameri* in flower as well as fantastic plants of *Pachypodium namaquanum* in habitat - every one was 6-7 feet tall, although there was no evidence of regeneration. This was at Umdaus - apparently the seeds are parasitized.

With *Pleiospilos nellii*, we saw the new plant growing from within the old leaves. It has a lovely large yellow flower which is scented. He finds it difficult to grow well. *Pelargonium carnosum* was found in southern Africa. Again this was growing on land taken over by a diamond mining company. *Pelecyphora aselliformis* is from Mexico. He has had this plant for 40 years now and got it originally from Holly Gate. One day he noticed it missing from the greenhouse, and three days later they found their dog playing with it in the garden. It still has teeth marks from that incident, but is now a gorgeous plant. Next was *Pediocactus paradinei* - if you water it early in the year it will grow but not flower. *Pediocactus bradyi* was very shrivelled, but it still flowered well, after that it can be watered and it will plump up quickly. *Pygmacereus densiaculeatus* was a plant which he never seen in flower.

Pterodiscus ngamicus is a caudiciform from Angola. *Pterodiscus speciosus* is a nicer looking species. It has a lovely flower but which smells disgusting. The crushed leaves also have an awful smell. *Pseudolithos* comes from Ethiopia and Somalia - when they first came in, they were a ridiculous price but you can now get them for a fiver. He remembered someone paying £60 for one at ELK about 20 years go and by the time it got home, the plant had turned to mush. He keeps his indoors in the winter but his wife does complain about the smell of the flowers. Next was *Quaqua mammilaris* - the plant tends to die in the centre but by then new growths will appear around the edge, so you can find stems 14 or 15 feet away from the original growing point. Next was a *Rebutia* with a salmon pink flower. *Rebutia colorea* has deep red flowers. One of nicest is *Rebutia muscula* - with soft white spines and bright orange flowers. *Rechsteineria* is from Brazil and used to be classified as a *Sinningia*.

With *Sulcorebutia*, the majority have been pushed into *Rebutia*, which he finds difficult to accept. They are popular plants which go under many different names. We saw *S. breviflora*, and *S. cardenasiana* has yellow flowers. One of the nicest is *S. crispa* and it was in a 7" pan - a wonderful sight when in flower. *S. arenacea* was also in a 7" pan and it makes a wonderful show every year - it also has neat spination. *Strombocactus disciformis* is from Mexico and was imported by the thousand a few years ago. He had come across a red flowered form and it now debated whether this is actually a hybrid with a *Turbincarpus*. *Sphalmanthus* was a plant which he found in South Africa - it flowers in our winter but for the other nine months of the year it looks like a piece of rock.

With *Sarcacaoulon multifidum* he grew it for a long time thinking it was a special flower colour but in nature there's quite bit of variation. It has lovely feathery foliage, nice flowers and a large tuberous root. It was just beginning to come into growth and will flower at Christmas. Some of the ones in the wild were 4 feet across. He wasn't sure of the name of one of the featured plants and *S. crassicaule* was suggested from the audience.

Sclerocactus (Glandulicactus) uncinatus has a weird colour flower and the flowers are never strong enough to push through the spines. He wondered how an insect could pollinate it? He watered it only a little. We also saw the flowers of *Senecio rowleyanus* - this is a member of the compositae and the flower consists of multiple florets. *Stapelias* were one of the first plants he photographed some forty years ago, and we saw an example of *Stapelia variegata*.

He is fascinated by *Tylecodons* which have nice flowers but are just a stick for the rest of the year. *T. bayeri* is yellow flowered. He found one growing in the middle of the road in South Africa. It was purple flowered but he had no idea of the name. Slightly bigger is *T. pearsonii*. *T. paniculatus* can get to 9 feet tall. These plants can give goats a brain disease if consumed, so farmers tend to eradicate them from their land.

The flowers of *Trichocaulon triebneri* have a awful smell. *Titanopsis hugo schelteri* blends in well with the surrounding sand and dirt. He found it in a new locality and Derek Tribble thanked him with a bottle of wine. We saw some seedlings of *Titanopsis calcarea* and the small plants had already started to form the calcified leaf tips. With *Thelocactus hexaedrophorus v. lloydii*, a large part of the plant is under the ground. One of the nicer ones is

Thelocactus heterochromus. *Toumeya papyracantha* needs very little water, and these days, the majority of sale plants of this are on grafts.

We saw *Testudinaria elephantipes* in the New Zealand collection. The strength of the caudex was illustrated by the fact that it had managed to push out a 6 inch nail. *Turbinicarpus alonsoi* was found 20 years ago – the majority of them have white or pink flowers. *Turbinicarpus macrochele* had deep red flowers. *T. pseudopectinatus* was a crested form. This flowers very early and it got him a 1st prize in the National Show last year. It fills an 8" pan to perfection. *T. valdezianus* has flowers which vary from white through to purple. The plants are no more than an inch tall and in cultivation it grows exactly as in habitat. *T. schmiedickeanus* was in a 7" pan – he advised not watering it too much. *T. viereckii* used to be classified as a *Gymnocactus*. *T. subterraneus* is found with 2 different flowered colour forms.

Uebelmannias were found in Brazil and imported to this country by the hundreds in the 1970s. he wasn't not sure how many were left in the wild, but we saw them growing well in New Zealand. There was a superb *Uebelmannia pectinifera*, also in New Zealand. *Weingartias* have been reduced into *Rebutia*, and we saw *W. hediniana*. One of the best is *W. trollii*, with a deep orange flower. *Xerosicyos pubescens* is from Madagascar and it has leaves covered in fine hairs. It is quite difficult to find in the wild.

His *Yucca* was originally in a 4 inch pot but after being planted out in his back garden it's now 20 feet tall and 15 feet tall wide. He has had to cut off the leaf points for safety. This year it had 13 flower spikes open all at the same time. He ended with the letter Z. He should have included a slide of *Zygocactus* but hadn't done so. He suggested maybe it should a reference to anyone in the audience who dropped off to sleep during the talk.

Vinay Shah

Table Show Results

There were 24 entries in the table show at the September meeting.

	Cacti – Gymnocalycium Group	Succulents – Haworthia & Gasteria Group
Open	(1) A Sheader <i>Gymnocalycium pungens</i>	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Gasteria armstrongii</i>
	(2) T Grech <i>Gymnocalycium joossensianum</i>	(2) T Grech <i>Haworthia kewensis</i>
	(3) A Sheader <i>Gymnocalycium saglionis</i>	(3) J Burnay <i>Haworthia retusa</i>
Intermediate	(1) J Roskilly <i>Gymnocalycium damsii</i>	(1) B Beckerleg <i>Haworthia maughani</i>
	(2) J Roskilly <i>Gymnocalycium mihanovichii</i>	(2) T Grech <i>Fenestraria rhopalophylla ssp. aurantiaca</i>
	(3) T Grech <i>Gymnocalycium saglionis</i>	(3) T Grech <i>Frithia pulchra</i>

Ivor Biddlecombe

Thanks are due to Mark Jakins for providing the following write-up of Alice Vanden Bon's talk :

August Meeting

Succulents of South Africa

For the August Meeting Alice Vanden Bon gave a talk on her trips to the Springbok area of South Africa during 2005, 2008 and 2009.

Her visits were carried out in small groups. One of the people who accompanied her was Chris Rodgeron who was able to show the group locations of specific genera, which otherwise would have been difficult to find.

The trips were usually carried out using 4x4 vehicles and on one occasion their Landrover got stuck in the river bed on a road up to a disused mine. This had to be dug out, and the group was very pleased that they had *two* Landrovers between them.

In a very remote area, they drove across sand dunes to visit a homestead, where they met a builder who was amazed that they had not sunk into the sand. He advised them to go back by a proper road, which was a long way round.

Alice also found some Hoodia plants, and she was pleased that they were still there, and had not all been dug up to make slimming drugs for Americans.

It was amazing for them to see the difference in the plants in 2009 from their previous trips as they went later and hit the beginning of the rainy season. The difference in the vigour of the plants was very apparent to see on the slides.

We saw many different Conophytums. It was nice to see habitat plants growing so naturally, rather than the "Russian Doll" greenhouse Conophytums where new heads split through last years bodies, and layers of sheathing build up.

We saw several Anacampseros / Avonia with minute and beautifully tight leaves.

Slides were also shown of :

- ?? Crassulas – in quartz, tight & not sprawling
- ?? Sarcocaulon & Monsonia
- ?? Pachypodium in quartz (& seedlings)
- ?? Larryleachia
- ?? Odontophorus
- ?? Ceraria (big bush)
- ?? Adromischus - very red leaves
- ?? Haworthia
- ?? Dioscorea

- ?? Othonna
- ?? Mitrophyllum - twiggy
- ?? Tylecodon seedlings
- ?? Stomatium
- ?? Brunsvigia (SA bulb)
- ?? Pelargonium
- ?? Cheiridopsis
- ?? Euphorbia
- ?? open mesemb seed pods
- ?? Huernia

We enjoyed seeing plants that were not cacti or succulents, such as some South African Bulbs and also some of the local wildlife as it gives you a better idea of the overall area.

The wildlife shown included:

- ?? Social Weaver bird
- ?? Southern Red Bishop bird
- ?? Fruit Chafer beetle
- ?? Blister beetle
- ?? Dung Beetle
- ?? Lizard
- ?? Toad Grasshopper
- ?? Ostrich

Alice said that it was well worth making the effort to climb the hills, as most of the best specimens were found at the top.

Mark Jakins

Branch Committee meeting

A committee meeting was held at Peter Down's on 21st September.

Recent meetings and events were discussed. Branch membership is healthy, with a number of new members having joined recently. We have also had good attendances at our monthly meetings.

The New Forest Show at July went well, with sales higher than in previous years. Thanks to donated plants, Branch funds received a good boost from this event.

The programme of events for 2010 was discussed. David Neville said that he had several ideas for speakers and was busy booking them.

Sparsholt College hold an open day each May, and this is popular with the public. It may be worth us putting on a display at this event, especially since Winchester is an area which is outside the reach of our current shows.

Some branch materials are still stored in Margaret Corina's loft. These would be retrieved in due course. David Neville suffered an arson attack last month and some branch property (information leaflets, paper bags and the gazebo) were damaged. These would be replaced.

The Zone 11 Quiz is due to be held at Portsmouth in October. Four or five committee members said they would attend, and it was hoped that several members would also come along. Maps of the Portsmouth meeting hall location would be produced for the next branch meeting.

Vinay Shah

Next Month's Meeting

The next meeting will be held on November 3rd and will feature Tony and Suzanne Mace who will be giving a talk titled "A Taste of France". No this is not about wine and cheese, but rather a talk on Cactus and Succulent collections and nurseries in Southern France.

Don't forget the Zone 11 Quiz at Portsmouth on the 17th of October!

The November table show will consist of the **Echinocereus group** (cacti) and **Lithops** (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.

Forthcoming Events

Fri	16 th	Oct	Isle of Wight	Society Slides - National Show 2000
Sat	17 th	Oct	Portsmouth	Zone 11 Quiz
Tue	3 rd	Nov	Southampton	A Taste of France - Suzanne & Tony Mace
Mon	16 th	Nov	Southampton	Committee Meeting
Fri	20 th	Oct	Isle of Wight	Propagation - vegetative methods (Bill Morris)
Sat	21 st	Oct	Portsmouth	Annual General Meeting
Tue	1 st	Dec	Southampton	AGM, followed by Christmas Social/American Supper

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