

# British Cactus & Succulent Society

## Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

December 2006



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## Editorial

The weather in November and early December has continued on from October – mild but also wet and blustery. The trees have just about lost their leaves, but given the mildness of the weather, it is hard to get used to the fact that the shortest day is only a couple of weeks away, and that Christmas will be here in just three weeks.

The Mammillaria which I mentioned last month has gone on to produce a full ring of magenta flowers, perhaps forcing a re-think of what “Christmas” cactus means! On some of the warmer days it is tempting to give the plants a drink but I have resisted this so far - there really isn't enough light for the plants to grow properly, and interrupting their winter rest will probably affect their ability to flower next year. One plant which does deserve a mention is *Brophyllum tubiflora* – having spent the last couple of years producing lots of little plantlets, the plant is about to flower – apparently the flowers are supposed to be quite attractive, but the plant will die after flowering.

## Announcements

The **2007 Branch programme** has been prepared and programme cards will be available from the front table – a list is also contained in this newsletter. The branch has again endeavoured to arrange a varied and interesting selection of talks and events for next year. One notable “scoop” is to have Steven Hammer talking to us about Conophytums, in March. The Zone 11 programme is being prepared by Cliff Thompson, and should be available at our next meeting.

The **January meeting** will consist of short talks presented by branch members, and we are planning to use both conventional and digital projectors. Talks involving real plants would be welcome too! If you would like to talk for a few minutes about any of your plants or plant-related experiences, or have some photos which you wish to share, please let one of the committee know. Digital pictures should be brought along on a CD or a memory card.

## Committee Reports - 2006

### *Chairman's Report*

For the last few years (especially since moving to our West End meeting hall) I have usually said something like the past year being a successful one. This year is no exception. Several displays have been well presented and attracted public interest.

We started at Easter with the show at Broadlands, Romsey with the ‘Prickly Potting’ attraction through which over 500 children passed, going home with a free potted plant, some cuttings, some seeds and information about what to do with them. This involved a lot of organisation and ‘man’power but hopefully ‘some seeds have been sown’ for future members of the B.C.S.S.

The New Forest Show was possibly one of the highlights of the year with thousands of people seeing our display over the three days. We have had a good selection of speakers at our monthly meetings. Because we have different interests some

people prefer cacti, some prefer other succulents and most of us are happy with both, there are bound to be some meeting that is not to our taste so much as others, but we seem to be a gracious gathering and enjoy the social side, the refreshments, the plant sales, the library, the table show, the plants of interest and the draw, so thank you for that.

The success of the branch is due to the hard work of the committee and a very few others. On behalf of the branch and the Society thank you all so much for all you do to make this branch one of the best in the B.C.S.S.

Best wishes for Christmas and a good growing year in 2007.

*Peter Down*

### **Secretary's Report**

On the small number of occasions I get to visit other branch meetings, where 10 to 15 people is a crowd, it is very satisfying to realise that our branch is one of the most thriving in the area, regularly averaging 30 attendees per meeting. At the time of writing we have 69 paid-up members and according to David Neville we are the second-best branch in the country for the number of new members joining this year. No doubt many of these have been tempted by our excellent website, thank you Vinay for looking after this and also the Hampshire eVolve site. Thanks also to both Vinay and David Neville for acting as my 'interface' to the online world for emails etc. to and from the Branch.

Jointly (+ Margaret) we continue to encourage our 'sleeping' members to attend meetings, and to help in this we do what is known as the 'Christmas Mailout'. This, if not actually instigated by Richard White, was brought to fruition by him, and involves sending an 'invitation' letter, the December Newsletter and the next year's Branch programme to the 'sleeping' members and other former members whose subscriptions have lapsed by one year. This year we will also be encouraging the uptake of the Gift Aid facility.

Margaret no doubt will be mentioning the Gift Aid scheme. I just want to note that the take-up nationally has been rather poor, and the Branch Committee encourages you to fill out a form (available from Margaret) if you have not already done so, and return it to her. The Society gains considerable financial benefit from the scheme.

Now a few comments now about the past year's events. At the Easter Prickly Potting, we dealt with

a record 570 or so 'pottings' for the children. Margaret and I would like to thank all our members who helped to spread the load at the potting stations during this demanding event. Help, even for a half-day, is always welcome. Other events were a somewhat mixed bag. Whiteley was too early and cold, the Common show was about average (gone are the days of huge sales there), at Hilliers we had about 220 visitors, most of whom showed much interest in our display, and our final venue, the New Forest Show, was its usual busy showcase.

In September, Eddy Harris came to speak to the branch; he also presented Ivor Biddlecombe with the Robert Holt Memorial Award, in recognition of his long-standing service to the Branch and Society.

As seems now to be a tradition, I thank the other half of the 'Secretaryship' (Margaret) for organising the 2007 Branch Programme. This is rarely an easy task. When we go to other branch's events, it is possible to approach prospective speakers directly, but it is difficult to twist someone's arm over the telephone! We try and get a balanced programme for you, but obviously we also like to find one or two 'new' speakers each year. Any member who has been to another branch and heard/seen a good talk, please let Margaret know.

Please note: There is no meeting in April 2007

The eagle-eyed among you may notice a gap in our list of outside events. At the time of writing, it appears that the Southampton Flower Festival will not be held in 2007. This is a great loss, as it one of our best showcases in addition to being the only event we do that is actually within the City.

The final plea that all Committee members must make! We are all getting set in our ways and the Branch Committee has remained unchanged for many years. So, to the new blood out there, the Branch needs you!!!

*David Corina*

### **Treasurer's Report**

Before I report on the Branch's finances I would like to draw your attention to the national ones! Earlier this year members should have received a Gift Aid declaration form with their journal. The latest membership list from the Society shows that large numbers of our branch members have not completed this form. If you pay tax, on either income, savings or dividends, PLEASE complete a Gift Aid form if you have not already done so. This

declaration enables the Society to claim back 28p for every £1 of your subscription. The Society has no knowledge or access to your personal affairs. All we do is submit the names to the Inland Revenue who cough up the cash! The Society can raise large sums this way; it also means that your subscriptions should remain unchanged for the foreseeable future. If you give me the completed form I will post it for you – you won't even have to pay for the envelope or the stamp! (If you have lost your form please ask me for a copy.)

The Branch has made the usual profit on its activities during the financial year 2005/06. We had one less event this year, as R.V.T. Events did not stage the summer show at Broadlands. The five events we did support have raised enough money for us to continue increasing our deposit, and enables us to keep our attendance at monthly meetings free of charge. With so many new visitors to meetings we are increasing our takings from the raffle and catering and this all helps to paying the charges we incur (speakers expenses and the rent for the hall). I must apologise to Glenn Finn, our Catering Manager, for the very small final profit figure on the catering, because in August we spent the takings stocking up on catering disposables for next year.

I will close with my usual thanks to everyone who has helped the Branch this year. Ivor Biddlecombe who raises large sums from his seed packeting efforts. All the people who set up and attend displays, and the ones who donate prizes for the raffle. I wish to thank also the people who buy and sell plants at meetings, those who provide the refreshments and those who consume them. All these activities contribute to Branch funds. Also a personal thank you to June Purseglove and Marilyn Prior who deal with the raffle at the meetings. The Branch is grateful to Colin and Lorraine Bielckus for auditing the books and producing the balance sheets for us.

I wish you all a restful Christmas, and hope you come back full of energy to support the Branch at the meetings and the events we have planned for next year.

*Margaret Corina*

### **Show Manager's Report**

Our first Show and Display was held at Broadlands, Romsey over the Easter weekend. The plant display took up a whole side of the marquee with the plant sales in a square at the centre, this left the side and end for the prickly potting. This was even better

supported than last year with over 500 plants and packets of seed given to the children. They all enjoyed the chance to pot up their plants and learn how to sow seed and take cuttings, and the event was very successful.

The weather at Whiteley Garden Market was sunny but also windy which was unfortunate as our display was in a shady position, and all of us manning the display had an uncomfortable time. If the weather had been better, things would have worked well as we had the use of a empty shop and were able to keep our plants under cover when the market was closed. We did manage to sell a few plants which helped with the branch funds, but the event was not as well supported as last year.

At the end of June, my brother Peter and I visited the Southampton Common to put up the display tables and backcloth for the Cacti & Succulent display for the Southampton Festival. We were pleased to find that Kathy Bailey had marked out the position of our display and put up the back frame and was already covering the competitive tables for the classes. This made it fairly easy for us to put up the covers and branch signs. I was disappointed that not all the competitive classes were supported; five classes had less than three entries. The Show was quite well supported by the public and we did sell a good number of plants so it was well worth doing.

In July, at the New Forest Show, Geoff Card and I put up the stand and we were pleased to see Margaret & David Corina, David Neville, Peter Down and Tony Grech. We were again given a position at the main entrance to the Flower Show. This year was better than last year, as the new style marquee had no guy ropes to get in the way of our display. The layout of the main show was similar to last year but some of the paths were better and there was less dust than last year. It was dry and very warm but not too uncomfortable. We had a good flow of visitors past our display, with many stopping to chat and buy plants. I think plant sales this year were not as good as last year but this may be due to a overall drop in number of visitors to the show. All who attended the show enjoyed it and this again was an event well worth doing.

This year's display at Hillier's Arboretum was in a different position from last year, as we were in the teaching annex opposite the main entrance to the gardens. We did not have as many visitors as last year for two reasons – firstly the weather was not very good, and secondly the visitors had to cross the forecourt to see our display. We had a large room to show our plants at their best and this enabled

everyone to have a good view of the plants. This year I altered the back frames in a way that enabled the back to be adjusted to suit the size of the table space available and this worked well as it gave four separate spaces to show different types of plants.

This year Portsmouth and District branch were the hosts for the Zone 11 Show, which was held at Widley in September. The entries were very slow coming in and I thought it was going to be a disaster (the Mesemb Show was also being held on the same day), but it turned out better than I expected with 17 members submitting 421 entries in the 64 classes. This turned out to be the best entry in a Zone 11 Show since 1998. It was unfortunate that we did not get support from the public. The weather was nice and the people that did visit remarked on the quality of the plants on show.

Please accept my sincere thanks to everyone that gave their help and support to me during 2006. I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

*Ivor Biddlecombe*

### **Plant Sales Officer's Report**

The year started well with £1200 worth of sales at Broadlands Easter show – not a record but well up on last year. At the other main shows, Southampton and The New Forest Show sales were very similar to last year. Sales at Branch meetings were up a bit on last year, probably because we seem to be getting more people to our meetings.

On behalf of the branch I would like to thank all of those of you who brought plants for sale and helped out on the sales table at the various events. Once again David Neville in particular deserves our thanks for all those plants he brings over from the continent and which boost our takings and commission considerably.

Plants sales are one of the attractions of the monthly meetings, particularly for the new members we are always trying to encourage, so if you have some spare plants or seedlings bring them along. Everyone is entitled to bring plants for the sales table, we charge 10% commission at branch meetings and 15% at shows. Don't forget to include a separate label with your initials and the price.

*Bruce Beckerleg*

### **Newsletter Editor / Website Report**

Newsletter production has been uneventful this year, which is probably the way it should be! I normally produce 32 copies each month, but in recent months we have actually run out. This confirms the healthy attendances at our monthly meetings, and I have done some reprints in case anyone missed out. I would like to thank all those who acted as scribes to write up branch meetings, and also those persons who provided articles for inclusion in the newsletter. I will also repeat my usual call for contributions – if you want to write something about your own plants or you have found an article which you think will be of interest to the other members, please do pass it on to me.

The branch website continues to provide information about our activities and it usually generates several enquiries over the course of the year. I have put up a page linking to other sites which might be of interest, and would also like to remind members that versions of our cultivation and seed raising leaflets can be viewed online, as can the full list of books available from the library. In addition, all copies of the newsletter dating from January 2004 are available for download.

*Vinay Shah*

### **Publicity Officer's Report**

First of all thanks to all who have, in any way, promoted our activities throughout the year. An especial thanks to all those who took part in mounting and/or manning our displays and shows.

I had wondered why the *Echo* and *Advertiser* had, for some time, not responded to our requests to be included in the respective *What's On* articles. I eventually enquired at the ECHO office and it appears that this previously free service now needed to be accompanied by a fee of £2.50 per entry. This would have been £5 per month for both papers. The matter was discussed in committee and it was decided that, in view of minimal response in the past, this was not a justified expense.

For the New Forest Show, Bruce was star of the week with a feature in the *Lymington Advertiser*. *Radio Solent* still gives us their usual strong support and earlier in the year, Peter Down was invited to appear in a 10 minute cactus and succulent spot on the Sunday dinner time gardening program.

Keep talking to relatives, friends and work colleagues about the fascination of our hobby. This especially applies to the younger element. Some of us are getting a bit long in the tooth now and keen young blood is needed to ensure the future of what to date has been a successful branch.

Finally seasonal greetings to all and thank you for the compassion and support you have given me over the recent difficult years it has been very much appreciated.

*Jim Roskilly*

### **Librarian's Report**

In the earlier part of the year we still had to rely on members of the committee to find room at home for our books. I am particularly grateful to Bruce Beckerleg, Ivor Biddlecombe and Glenn Finn for doing this and bringing books to and from meetings. I am glad to report that we now have cupboard space where we hold our meetings, so this will no longer be necessary.

The librarian has a complete list of books held. The most important books will always be available at meetings: others will be made available on request. There has been a recovery in the usage of the library. 20 books were borrowed, as compared with 9 last year.

Total revenue for the year was £7.60, made up as follows:

Source	2005/6	2004/5
Lending	£4.60	£ 5.60
Sale of surplus books		£21.80
Sale of old Journals	£3.00	
TOTAL	£7.60	£27.40

We have a very well-equipped library. There are books to suit all tastes. Some are encyclopaedias to give an overall view. Others are focussed on a specific genus. A few describe habitats and give advice on culture. For 20p a month, a real bargain! Since the end of our financial year, there has been a major addition to the library. It is the New Cactus Lexicon and was reviewed in the November Newsletter.

*Philip Clemow*

### **Pots & Sundries Manager's Report**

The ups and downs of the business world seem to be reflected on a micro-scale in the Branch's market place. Having returned good profits last year, the profit from pots and sundries has cycled downwards this year. A mere £20 (unaudited). Well, it will pay for the hall for one meeting! There were four meetings (other than the Christmas social) at which Pots & Sundries were, unfortunately, not available (one being when Margaret and I stood in for an indisposed outside speaker) so there are my excuses!

Some things may go down, others go up to compensate. Nowadays, sales of our basic cultivation 'Green Booklets' at shows and other events form a major part of Sundries profits. Even though there was one less event this year (Broadlands, August), we ran out of booklets before the end of this year's event season and had to resort to printing some off on our computer to satisfy the demand at the New Forest Show. A new, revised edition is planned for next year, with a bigger print run. Many of you may not have seen this publication, as I rarely bring any to meetings (I assume most members are not absolute beginners). If anyone would like to see a copy, and possibly suggest additions or amendments, see me – but make it soon! We want to go to press in late January!

Meanwhile, please do keep supporting *all* the sales tables at meetings. Good growing for 2007, even if it is in black square pots!

*David Corina*

## Last Month's Meeting

### Plants of Interest

November's *Plants of Interest* had been brought in by Jim Roskilly. He mentioned that this was a selection of some of his smaller plants.

First were two examples of *Conophytum stephanii*, which is one of the smaller growing conophytums. The first plant had small heads which were just 4 or 5mm across. The second plant had slightly larger heads, 10mm across.

Next were 2 small growing *Anacampseros*. The first was *A. rhodesica*. The second was *A. deltiianus* (?) – this was very slow growing and Jim mentioned that it didn't seem to have done anything in the last two years. The next two plants were cultivars named after the late Bryan Makin - *Adromischus marianae* cv. 'Bryan Makin' and *Haworthia cooperi* cv. 'Bryan Makin'. Both of these plants were nicely marked.

*Gymnocalycium mihanovichii* is quite a handsome cactus with a dark body and the specimen Jim had brought along had very prominent tubercles. Next were two forms of *Crassula ausensis* – the regular form with small white flecks on the green leaves and ssp. *titanopsis* where the leaves are covered with much more prominent white blobs.

*Haworthia sordida* is a dark leaved and slow growing plant which is considered a choice species. It is almost always solitary. *Tylecodon minima* is the smallest of the tylecodons. It eventually forms pink flowers. *Ceraria pygmaea* has chunky green leaves and makes a good bonsai specimen since it can go on to form a woody trunk. This plant was in flower although the blooms were rather insignificant.

A solitary *Opuntia* pad was a nice olive green colour and seemed to be devoid of any spines. Jim had bought it from Bruce but didn't know the species. David Neville suggested that it might be a cultivar. A crested *Copiapoa laui* was growing on a graft. This is one of the smaller growing copiapoas. Next was a *Yavia cryptocarpa* which was also growing on a graft and which had split along one side of the body. Jim mentioned that this was his second *Yavia* – the first had also split and subsequently died, and he was hoping this wouldn't go the same way.

The final exhibit was a piece of root ginger which Jim had bought from Sainsburys because he spotted some small green shoots on it. After planting it,

nothing much happened for several weeks, but suddenly it had thrown up some tall green shoots.

Thanks are due to David Corina for providing the following write-up of last month's talk.

### A Continental Experience

Some events are remembered long after their importance or interest has faded. One such was the continental trip of 1989, as recounted by Doug Donaldson, which has entered the folk legends of the Society. It may seem a little unusual to go so historical, but the trip was full of incidents and minor mishaps that added spice to an interesting story.

For newer members these trips are 'three day events' involving a tour by coach (and ferry) to Holland and western Germany to visit succulent (*sensu lato*) nurseries and collections (often the same establishment). These are organised (if this is the right expression) by a certain Warren Withers, who appears to be a bit of a character! This is evident when the participants gather at his house to await the coach. Apparently Warren's garden is almost all greenhouses, with one even built over a small fishpond. The motley crowd boarded the coach, with seemingly more large (empty at this stage) boxes than luggage, and set off for Hull. The first snag was that the coach broke down on the way, and a replacement brought up – involving the first transfer of boxes – to take them as far as (but not onto) the ferry. Unload everything again and go as foot passengers, at which point Doug showed a picture of a forlorn but youthful David Neville, having drawn the short straw, guarding a large pile of 50 empty boxes prior to these going into the hold. At the meeting, David could not recall this duty; however later in the talk he did admit to remembering other 'incidents', and Doug showed that David was nearly always the last away from a nursery or collection.

Next mishap was the ferry losing all power during the overnight passage, and apparently drifting until this was fixed, with a consequent late arrival in Rotterdam. Reload again into another (Dutch) coach (with a new driver) the party eventually set off. As the trip was nearly 20 years ago, Doug explained that many of the nurseries they visited were no longer in existence, or no longer grew succulents. Sadly, also many of the participants on the trip are no longer with us, most notably Liz and Ken Etheridge from Portsmouth.

At last we arrive at our first stop, Cok Grootsholten's nursery, (which used to be peppers) but was then cacti, and is now much changed) together with one of many pictures of Warren Withers, who always appears to be (optically and mentally?) out of focus! Cok's plants were unpriced then, and it was difficult to know what was for sale. A potential problem when a coachload descends on a nursery, especially as there are often only a few hours (maybe just two) at each stop, is that there can be something of a rush to view and purchase plants. Large queues form at the 'checkouts' at the end of the visits, often compounded by language barriers and managing the different currencies (the trip was before the introduction of the Euro). Sometimes there is a compensatory round of refreshments provided by the host at the end of each visit.

Oh yes, there were some plants pictured here! The caudiciform *Euphorbia trichadenia*, a *Monadenium*, and then some Espostoas at under £1 each. They viewed his collection of cerei (not for sale) and came away with a present of a *Eulychnia*. Back to the coach with a carrot to bribe the goat which guarded the nearby bridge and on to Hans Biesheuvel whose claim to fame was wearing size 15 traditional clogs. The speciality here seemed to be *Sclerocactus* where several species were grown en masse as grafted plants. Doug acquired a collection of most of those available. Other delights noted here were *Mammillaria egregii* (and its cristate form), *M. herrerae*, *Discocactus horstii* cristate and lots of grafted cristates and other choice cacti; Doug mentioned that Hans does grafting for him. Also around were tree ferns (new to Europe in those days) lots of grafted *Ariocarpus* seedlings, *Buiningia*, crested *Ariocarpus fissuratus*, *Tylecodon reticulatus* and Doug's purchase of his first plant of *Opuntia ovata*. Doug also showed a picture of David Neville chatting to Hans.

Some of these nurseries can be quite unkempt, often with large untidy areas of 'ordinary' plants, but Doug mentioned that it is nearly always worth rooting around as amongst them you may find some gems. Unlikely to find much chaos at the next stop where Ernst and Marita Specks pose for a photo at their nursery 'Exotica', perhaps the best-known succulent nursery on the continent, and of course still going strong in new premises. Exotica is the haven for succulents, as long as one is not disturbed by the ethics of buying some collected plants. Large specimens of *Adenia spinosa*, *Pyrenacantha malvifolia* (a caudiciform), *Bombax ellipticum* and a plant I think was called *Severesia*, which looked like sculpted marble full of small hole in which smaller spiders resided! Other plants noted were *Adenia*

*kirkii*, *Rechsteineria* (now *Sinningia*) *leucotricha*, *Othonna euphorbioides*, *Sarcocaulon herrei*, a tall *Monadenium elegans*, *Dorstenia benguellensis* (but your scribe thought the flowers looked more like *D. barminiana*), *Pachypodium rosulatum*, *Fockea crispa*, *Pachypodium bispinosum* (with a big hole through it) and *Zygosycios* (now *Xerosicyos*) *pubescens*, a large *Cyphostemma juttiae* plus some huge dormant tubers under a bench, awaiting potting up when they start to grow. There were lots of smaller plants also, such that there was not much room to move around in at the nursery.

In those days, phytosanitary certificates were required to import plants into the UK, and the party realised that they had far more plants than their certificates covered. They were directed to a place in Holland where they could obtain further certificates. En route, of course, all their goodies have to be packed into the boxes they have been carting around, and Doug showed scenes from the merry 'depotting' parties at the next hotel, together with some rather unorthodox methods of disposing of the surplus compost! Next a nursery no longer there at Oberhausen run by Heinz Vermaseren, a very interesting feature of which was a painting of a cactus scene on the garage door. Doug obtained 'permission' to copy it and showed its new incarnation on his garage door, alongside other murals on his house walls. This nursery was very untidy, but a few plants stood out, such as large *Rhipsalis*, cerei and lots of globulars among which were hidden nice *Ariocarpus*, *Ferocactus wislizeni* in fruit and *F. acanthodes* with good red spines. Nearby were a huge *Mammillaria geminispina* and an *Echinocactus grusonii*, which Doug purchased, and still has. There were many 'seedling' *Carnegiea gigantea* up to 5ft tall, plus some much older and taller plants. Also a nice *Astrophytum capricorne* and 5" *A. asterias* stood out; Doug bought a double-stemmed *Astrophytum* that eventually reached 18" tall. Other finds were *Echinocereus lindsayi* at 1ft tall, *Pilosocereus braunii*, loads of *Melocactus* and *Uebelmannia pectinifera* and a well-hidden group of illegally collected *Ariocarpus hintonii*!

We think that the English are eccentric, but inside his house Heinz showed the party a wardrobe that was full of choice cristates! Around and about were *Alluaudia* and *Nolina* (*Beaucarnea*) and a mature *Agave pumila*, looking somewhat different from the juvenile form we usually see around. Pay up, and move on. Short stop at Jörg Piltz, where there was not a lot of the greenhouse open, and only really some choice gymnocalyciums to browse. On again to van Donkelaar but this call was primarily to get the top-up phytosanitary certificates for the plants as

there was otherwise not much of interest here. The last night was upon them, and the winding-down party was 'gatecrashed' by an itinerant seller with a specially fitted out suitcase full of *Ariocarpus* and *Melocactus*!

Homeward bound, and the English coach had reputedly been repaired and was waiting at the ferry port, but there was no booking for it or the party on the ferry that evening! While this was being sorted, some of the party went off on a couple of final visits, one to another well-known nursery, De Hertz. He specialised in growing cacti for seed production – and then growing on the seedlings for sale, so large areas of the nursery were taken up with stock plants. Notable amongst these were *Obregonia* and *Lophophora*, with *Astrophytum* as a minor player. In the collection Doug noted a nice deep rust-colour-spined *Mammillaria elongata* (by coincidence, your scribe found one last year, and yes I know they are easy!) and an *Agave parryi* (type) with a flower spike. Many other plants which were choice then but not so now included *Copiapoa cinerea*, *Echinocactus grusonii* (spineless form), *Melocactus azureus*, *Stenocactus lamellosus*, the nice compact form of *Agave victoriae-reginae*, a large (for Europe) *Adenium obesum*, *Echeveria lauii* (too near the edge of the bench!), top cuts of *Backebergia militaris*, *Ferocactus stainesii* v. *pilosus*, a mother plant plus seedlings, and a multi-headed *Leuchtenbergia principis* (give it high light for flowers).

Last call in Rotterdam was a nursery run by Weacock(?) where alligators seem to be used instead of guard dogs! Only a few large plants here, *Agave micracantha* (probably), *Oreocereus trollii*, large *Ferocacti*, a 20ft *Carnegiea gigantea* cristate and an honorary succulent, a colourful *Strelitzia reginae*.

Meanwhile the return trip on the ferry had been sorted, boxes were again transferred (back) to the original English coach and on the return voyage the party kipped as best they could in the lounge. On the last leg, guess what – the coach played up again when almost home, and the last mile or so was completed on another coach, with the first coach (still containing the boxes) on tow, brought to as near as possible to the final destination to be unloaded. Despite all these setbacks, the party looked very pleased with their well-filled boxes. Do not let this saga put you off going on one of these trips, they are a good chance to see what is on offer at some of the top nurseries on the continent – even if the vast areas of glass do put our back garden

greenhouses to shame. We all thanked Doug for a very entertaining trip!

David Corina

### Table Show – November 2006

There were 12 entries in the November table show.

	Cacti – Echinocereus	Succulents – Lithops
Open	(1) B Beckerleg Echino. dasyacanthus	(1) T Grech Lithops salicola
	(2) T Grech Echinocereus sp.	(2) B Beckerleg Lithops bromfieldii
	(3) -	(3) -
Intermediate	(1) P Clemow Echino. rusanthus	(1) B Beckerleg Lithops optica rubra
	(2) B Beckerleg Echino. rigidissimus	(2) P Clemow Lithops dorotheae C300
	(3) T Grech Echinocereus sp.	(3) P Clemow Lithops hookeri

Ivor Biddlecombe

## Branch Committee Meeting

A branch committee meeting was held at 79 Shirley Avenue on 20<sup>th</sup> November.

The financial results for the year ending September 2006 were discussed briefly. It had been another successful year with the branch continuing to add to our accumulated fund.

Next year's programme of events had been finalised and the branch programme was ready to go to print. No meeting will be held in April, but in March we had been able to book the renowned expert on mesembs, Steven Hammer. It was also agreed that since we have not held a branch show for a number of years, we should make an attempt to hold a show on one of the days of the Summer Show at Broadlands. One event that is unlikely to take place next year due to council cutbacks is the Southampton Festival.

Portsmouth branch had been unaware that it was their turn to host the Zone 11 Quiz and had not allocated any slots for this in their 2007 programme. Therefore we have agreed to step in and host the Quiz next year.

The branch library was discussed briefly. The branch holds a number of books which are not brought along to the monthly meetings but which are available to borrow – a list is displayed on the library trolley. None of these books had been borrowed in the last three years and we weren't sure whether this was because people didn't know about the books or because those titles just were not popular.

*Vinay Shah*

## Branch Programme 2007

2 January	Members' Evening
6 February	John Watmough Succulents on a Shoestring
6 March	Steven Hammer Conophytums
3 April	no meeting (hall unavailable)
7-9 April	Spring Flower & Garden Show, Broadlands (Easter Weekend)
1 May	Branch Mini-Show & Judging (Cliff Thompson)
26-28 May	Display and Plant Sales @ Garden Market, Whiteley Village
5 June	Barry Glover Desert in Bloom
16-17 June	Display and Plant Sales @ Sir Harold Hillier Arboretum, Ampfield
3 July	Neil Oakman Wild West
24-26 July	Display and Plant Sales @ The New Forest Show, Brockenhurst
7 August	Zone 11 Quiz
11-12 August	Display and Plant Sales @ Summer Craft/Garden Show, Broadlands
4 September	Tom Radford Asclepiadaceae
2 October	Anthony Mitchell Confessions of a Cactogenarian
6 November	Rodney Sims Eastern Cape
4 December	AGM & Christmas Social

## Table Show 2006 – Overall Results

The overall results for the table shows held during 2006 are as follows:

### Open Section – Cacti (The Challenge Cup)

<b>B Beckerleg</b>	<b>30</b>
T Grech	21
P Clemow	18
J Roskilly	9
G Finn	7
J Burnay	5
R Courtney	3

### Open Section – Succulents (The Gateway Vase)

<b>B Beckerleg</b>	<b>33</b>
J Roskilly	26
T Grech	19
P Clemow	11
J Burnay	11

### Intermediate Section – Cacti (The Bangor Cup)

<b>B Beckerleg</b>	<b>28</b>
J Roskilly	17
P Clemow	16
G Finn	6
T Grech	5
R Courtney	2

### Intermediate Section – Succulents (25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Paperweight)

<b>B Beckerleg</b>	<b>31</b>
P Clemow	19
J Burnay	17
J Roskilly	12
T Grech	10

### Ladies Cup (Highest points gained by a female Exhibitor)

Awarded to **J Burnay**

*Ivor Biddlecombe*

## Next Month's Meeting

Our first meeting of 2007 will be held on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, and will feature short talks by branch members. If you have a subject that you would like to talk about (even if only for a few minutes), please let a Committee member know as soon as possible. We will have access to conventional and digital projectors, so members are welcome to bring along slides, or a CD or memory card containing digital pictures.

The January Table Show will consist of the **Neoporteria** and **Copiopoa** Groups (cacti) and the **Adromischus** Subgroup (succulents). Please note that you are allowed multiple entries in any of the classes.

The Neoporteria group includes *Neoporteria*, *Austrocactus*, *Chileorebutia*, *Eriosyce*, *Horridocactus*, *Islaya*, *Neochilenia*, *Pyrrhocactus*, *Rodentiophila* and *Thelocephala*. The Copiopoa Group includes *Copiopoa* and *Pilocopiopoa*.

The Adromischus subgroup includes *Adromischus*, *Brophyllum*, *Cotyledon*, *Crassula*, *Kalanchoe*, *Kitchingia*, *Rochea*, *Tillaea*, *Tylecodon*, and *Vauanthes*.

*Best Wishes for a  
happy Christmas and  
a merry New Year!*



## Forthcoming Events

Fri 15 <sup>th</sup>	Dec	Isle of Wight	<b>AGM</b> and Christmas Social
Tue 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jan	Southampton	Members' Evening
Mon 15 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Southampton	Committee Meeting
Fri 19 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Isle of Wight	Plant Auction & Members' Slides
Sat 20 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Portsmouth	"Argentina - Part 1" – Cliff Thompson
Tue 6 <sup>th</sup>	Feb	Southampton	"Succulents on a Shoestring" – John Watmough
Fri 16 <sup>th</sup>	Feb	Isle of Wight	Branch Quiz & Members' Talks
Sat 17 <sup>th</sup>	Feb	Portsmouth	"Arizona Adventure – Part 1" – Alan Phipps

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