

# British Cactus & Succulent Society

## Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

December 2018



### Branch Secretary

David Neville  
6 Parkville Road  
Swaythling  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO16 2JA

davnev@bopenworld.com  
(023) 80551173 or  
07974 191354

### Newsletter Editor

Vinay Shah  
29 Heathlands Road  
Eastleigh  
Hampshire  
SO53 1GU

sotonbcss@gmail.com  
(023) 80261989

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## Editorial

Well, we are into December and the weather during the daytime is surprisingly mild. We have had a few frosts, but nothing too cold as yet. Despite all the discussion about whether global warming is real or not, we certainly seem to be encountering warm weather later into the year in recent years.

## Announcements

Our **next meeting** will be held on **8<sup>th</sup> January** and will consist of short talks by branch members. We would like members to bring along photos or plants and talk about them for a few minutes. Pictures can be brought along on slides or a memory stick, and should be prefixed with 001, 002, 003 etc. so that they are shown in the correct order. Please let David Neville know ASAP if you would like to present.

The **branch programme for 2019** has been prepared and is available from the front table.

The branch's **financial accounts** for the year ending September 2018 will also be handed out during today's AGM.

## Last Month's Meeting

### Chairman's Report

Again, this year has been eventful for our branch with a good mix of invited speakers, branch member talks, propagation activities and shows. We continue to participate each year in the New Forest, Sparsholt and Romsey shows. The effort put into these by members of the committee together with other branch members is considerable. The interactions with the public are of great value in publicising the BCSS and attracting new members to our branch. The high standard of the branch display at the Romsey Show was once again recognised by the award of a gold medal. Our branch meeting attendances are good being normally over 30 people who bring with them much experience and knowledge of cacti and succulents. We are fortunate to have amongst us national judges, speakers and international travellers and all contribute to a friendly, buzzing atmosphere. We are pleased to have welcomed several new members to our branch and delighted that members of other branches often join us at our meetings. Sadly we lost Jim Roskilly in September. He had been a branch member for over 40 years and served on our committee for a significant time. Other members are no longer able to attend meetings for various reasons. They are missed.

It is a pleasure to be Chair of the branch committee which now has ten members. Our two newest members Jane Williams and Robin Caddy have both jumped into committee work enthusiastically and helpfully. It is not easy to single out particular contributors to the smooth running of the branch as there are so many, not only on the committee, but also other branch members who help willingly and regularly. However, special thanks are due to David Neville for his unstinting input and expertise in organising our yearly programme, dealing with all aspects of speakers visits and for being such an active force at our meetings. A second person of note is Ivor Biddlecombe and I am not just thinking of his super cakes at branch meetings, but also the many gold medals, table show organisation at our meetings, and outside show contributions. To all branch and committee members who give of their

time and expertise to our flourishing branch activities, thank you very, very much.

I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and all the best for the year to come.

*Adrian Bailey*

### **Secretary's Report**

2018 has proven to be another successful year for our Branch. Attendance at meetings remains healthy, and unusually we have welcomed new faces to virtually every meeting of the year, although not all of these people have become regular attendees or BCSS members. It is difficult to know why some people visit us just once or twice and then stop coming along to our meetings, but maybe the reason is simply that perhaps their level of interest is not strong enough to warrant regular attendance.

I have been busy over recent weeks putting together a programme for 2019, and it is now complete and ready for distribution. Finding different speakers who are willing and able to travel mid week is not easy, because many people of course have to go to work the following morning, but I think we have a good mix of presentations to look forward to and I hope that everyone will find some topics that particularly appeal to their interests. There should be printed copies available at the December meeting, and a PDF version will be sent out shortly to all those members for whom I have an up to date email address. If you are reading this and you don't receive occasional emails from me, it is probably because I don't have your email details – all you need to do is contact me by sending an email to [davnev@btopenworld.com](mailto:davnev@btopenworld.com) and I will ensure that you are added to the circulation list.

Most of the activities of the Branch will be covered in the reports of the other members of the Committee, and I do not wish to steal their thunder, so I will close my report here, and take this opportunity to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and New Year. I look forward to seeing you all at our January meeting, to be held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> (in order to avoid the New Year Bank Holiday), where we will enjoy a number of short presentations from Branch members, covering a range of topics.

*David Neville*

### **Treasurer's Report**

I would like to thank Colin and Lorraine Bielckus for completing our annual accounts in such a quick time. Due to combination of several factors the

branch has made a small loss of £44.00. Our income from shows and regular monthly meetings was up on the previous year. As with most things in the current economic climate, our costs such as hall rental and speaker costs have gone up compared to the previous year. We always try to ensure that we had quality speakers at our meetings. Some travel a considerable distance and some require overnight accommodation. As a result, speaker costs fluctuate from year to year and this was the main contributing factor to this years' loss. I'm sure you all agree that speaker selection is what makes our branch attract visitors from neighbouring branches, and makes our meetings vibrant and interesting. Lastly our administrative expense went up this year as we needed to print a batch of leaflets to promote our branch at shows.

The Branch continues to maintain a very comfortable savings and current account balance of £7,802.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best throughout the festive season and look forward to seeing you all next year.

*Alice Jankovec*

### **Display Manager's Report**

**Sparsholt Countryside Day** - We all arrived at the car park at 8am and started to unpack. One of the organisers suggested we move slightly nearer to the entrance and we agreed it would be a better position for our gazebo as it was a flatter area. Being near to the entrance was a better place to sell our plants and show off the display. The weather was better this year but sales were about the same as last year. The Sparsholt event is of a high standard with plenty to see and do for visitors. I would like to thank all the branch members that came for their help in staging and managing the display.

**New Forest Show** - This year the Show was held on the 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> July with set-up day on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The weather this year was exceptional, with high temperatures on all four days including the set up day. Plant sales were very good on Tuesday and Wednesday, but on Thursday plant sales were slower. The event still helped with branch funds, and our display won a silver gilt prize card. The judges were very complementary with our efforts but we cannot compete with the professionals, as we all grow our plants in different pots. I did not think I would be doing this Show but Bruce very kindly took care of the display covers and signs, and ran the sales table over the three days, Ted Smith and his grandson were a big help in pinning up the

backcloth and helping with plant sales. I would like to thank additional members for their help in making the show the success: Dot, Ben, David, Paul, and Alice.

**Romsey Show** - This year I am pleased to say the weather was dry, with sunny periods all day. Bruce, Dot, Ben, myself and my brother Peter all arrived at 2.30pm on the Friday to set up the display. This year our display was at the end of the marquee, with two sales tables side by side instead of the usual L shape. We soon had the back cloths stapled in place and sale plants in position. On Saturday, Alice gave her support and helped on the sales table. We managed to win a gold medal for the display – not quite as good as last year but still good for our funds. It was easy to leave the Show Ground as there was no mud this year and this meant a good finish to the day.

**The Table Show** had a total of 16 people enter plants, although for the cacti and succulent classes, it is rare to see more than 3-4 people entering each month. I would like it if more members entered more classes, as most of our members say they enjoy looking at the plants each month.

Wishing you all a merry Christmas and hope you all have a happy New Year, deciding what plants to enter for the table show in 2019. All the best,

*Ivor Biddlecombe*

### **Librarian's Report**

This year we have again added some more books to the branch library. Four books were donated - thank you again, Ian! The books were all described in "Books and things" articles in various branch Newsletters during 2018, but in case you missed any, here is a summary:

- "Succulents of Southern Africa", Frandsen (2017)
- "Cites Cactaceae Checklist", David Hunt & IOS (1999)
- "Richtersveld – The Enchanted Wilderness", Williamson (2000)
- "Namaqualand – A Succulent Desert", Cowling, Pierce & Paterson-Jones (1999)
- "Aeoniums in Habitat and Cultivation" by Rudolf Schulz (2007)
- "A Handbook of Succulent Plants", Jacobsen (1960)

The library contains approximately 100 books, including some multi-volume and journal sets, and some which I don't normally put out on display each month. If you see something in the library list (on the library table or on the branch web-site at <http://www.southampton.bcss.org.uk/library.html>) that you'd like to look at or borrow, please talk to me during a meeting or contact me by email

(richard@rjwhite.tk) or phone (01425 653840) or text (07751 937060) and I'll try to make sure it's on the library table at the next meeting.

If you have any books on loan from the library, please remember to return them at the next meeting – the borrowing fee is now 30p per month (excluding December). We plan to offer for sale a few duplicate or outdated books at branch meetings during 2019. Conversely, if you have any recent books not already in our library that you no longer require, we may be able to find them a good home where they are cared for and let out on monthly leave to interested readers.

Although (or because) many of the plants we grow are leafless, make a New Year's Resolution to turn over a few new leaves, bibliographically speaking, in 2019. Season's Greetings to all!

*Richard White*

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

The season started off, as usual, with a small display at Sparsholt Open Day where we took £460 which is similar to last year and well up on all the years before that. It is a pity that the event will not be held next year.

At the New Forest Show takings were £1358 which is very similar to last year. Takings here jumped up 5 or 6 years ago but have not really increased since, despite the alleged surge in the popularity of cacti!

Our last show was at Romsey where we took an amazing £845 which is almost £300 higher than last year, it seems the 'Cactus Bug' has hit Romsey but not Brockenhurst. We also won a Gold medal which yielded £90 in prize money, it's a pity the New Forest Show does not give us prize money as well!

Sales at branch meetings have been good, as they were last year. We have continued to get a number of different sellers which adds extra interest to the sales table. I would like to thank all of you who brought sales plants to branch meetings and other events.

For those of you who do not know, anyone can bring plants for the sales table, just make sure each plant has a price label with your initials on it. We charge 10% commission at branch meetings and 15% at shows.

*Bruce Beckerleg*

## **Publicity Officer's Report**

There are several ways we can spread the word about the Branch and everything we do.

Firstly we have our own branch Facebook page. If you haven't seen it before you can find it at <https://www.facebook.com/southamptonbcss/> With the way Facebook works the nearly 900 people who follow this page might in fact have no connection with our area at all, so it's best not to get too caught up in the numbers. However any activity on the page (likes, comments, shares, posts by you) helps the page become more visible to others on Facebook. If you use Facebook it's easy to do your bit!

Secondly I share details of our monthly meetings to various Radio Stations' events listings. Thirdly I add details of our meetings to various *What's ON* websites including one maintained by Hampshire County Council, and a more Southampton-specific one.

Another very useful avenue for promoting our Branch is through the shows we attend and the great Displays we present to the visitors. In fact such shows are probably are greatest way of promoting the Branch, Society and hobby. Alongside these shows this year, we produced a Branch leaflet detailing our events and giving some information about our plants. This was financed by the Society for which we are grateful, and we gave away 500 leaflets and 40 seed kits for children (mainly at the New Forest Show, but also at Romsey)

Finally the most important way we can spread the word is.... each and every one of us! If we talk enthusiastically about our plants and our Branch then people can see the passion we have. This passion can be contagious! Think about which meetings would be suitable for friends who don't have much experience, which would be great for a friend who has a long interest in certain plants. Think about taking a friend to the excellent shows twice a year in Portsmouth.

If you have any exciting contacts, great ideas, or, like Portsmouth Branch, a burning desire to be on Radio Solent's gardening show, do please let me know. Best wishes for 2019.

*Robin Caddy*

## **Newsletter Editor's Report**

The branch continues to enjoy good meeting attendances throughout the year and I've increased the newsletter print run to ensure everyone has a

printed copy. If you fail to receive a newsletter at a particular meeting, please note that copies of them can also be downloaded from our website. There are over 160 newsletters online and when I have some time I will create an index-by-subject of the write-ups of talks which are featured in each newsletter.

Our home page continues to be updated with details of the upcoming meeting a few days before each meeting is held, and this gives members a bit of additional information. If the weather is bad, and a meeting needs to be cancelled, this will also be announced on the website, as soon as is practical.

The programme of events for 2019 has been finalised by David, and the branch website will be updated to show next year's meetings and events. Once I receive Portsmouth and Isle of Wight's programmes, I will also update the Zone 11 page.

Best wishes to everyone for 2019.

*Vinay Shah*

## **Last Month's Meeting**

### ***Around The Collection***

Stuart thanked us for asking him to speak to us. He said it was good to see a well-attended branch - for a speaker it's nice to drive 90 miles to give a talk and to have a decent sized audience. He mentioned he wasn't sure what to call his talk but he had added some cultivation and propagation topics to the talk. He was using a new projector which Amazon had delivered to him in a unique way - pictures of this were to follow later in the evening. He had brought along several plants so would talk about these in the first half of the meeting, and then show slides in the second half. He mentioned that of the plants he had brought, there were more succulents than cacti. In his experience, people often start with growing cacti and then they move on to growing succulents. In his collection, about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the plants are cacti and the rest are the other succulents.

He started with a cactus - it was the sort of thing that you might be given at the BCSS judges course, as a challenge. It was actually a cross between *Ferocactus glaucescens* and *Stenocactus coptonogonus*, which is the one *Stenocactus* without wavy ribs. This hybrid was created by Miles Anderson in Tucson. *Ferocactus*, *Stenocactus*, *Thelocactus* and *Leuchtenbergia* are all closely related and they can be crossed with each other. It was basically like a very spiny *Stenocactus* and Stuart said it produced large flowers, halfway in size between the flowers of the two parents.

Next was a plant of *Mammillaria campotricha*. The spination on this species varies, and there are some cultivars with short spines, and this new form he had found had even shorter spines, giving it an unusual appearance. It produces white flowers. Next was a grafted plant which he had been given in Southend. It was a grafted *Uebelmannia* and when handed to him, it was just some lumps in a plastic bag. It had some rot and was also infested with mealy bug. He got rid of the mealy - the best way to do this is to go into the garden and spray the plant with a powerful jet of water with sufficient force to wash off the mealy although you don't want to dislodge the plant from the pot. If you don't want to do this, the other option is to use Provado, and the older formulations, which are no longer sold work better than the new formulation. He proceeded to cut the plant into 5 pieces and created new grafts and luckily one of these survived. It had now turned into an attractive plant.

*Mammillaria bertholdii* is a relatively new discovery from Mexico, and it has an unusual appearance, looking like a *Pelecypora* or an *Epithelantha*. It has a flat body and large pectinate spines, but when it flowers you can see it's a *Mammillaria*. This particular plant was on a graft and while in his greenhouse last winter, it was attacked by a snail which ate some of the heads - why do they always go for your best plants? It was grafted onto a *Ferocactus* which actually makes a good grafting stock. The plant had recovered nicely from its ordeal and you could hardly see any signs of the damage the snail had caused.

Next was an *Echinopsis*. The plant may look like an unremarkable cactus when not in flower but they can produce some amazing blooms. The ISI distributed a large number of "Schick" hybrids from the Huntington Gardens over the years, and there are also cultivars available from UK growers such as Doug Sizmur (Kent Cacti) and Brian Goody (Southfields). This particular plant was cv. "Bourne Bewitched". The flowers on *Echinopsis* hybrids come in a variety of colours including bicolors and they flower for 2-3 days, and the plants are also capable of flowering 2-3 times a year.

Next was a plant obtained from Ken Burke, who used to run Pete and Ken's nursery many years ago. They used to grow a huge number of plants in small 2" pots and everything was priced under £1. This plant was *Ariocarpus scaparostrus*. Although grown in a BEF pot, which were made from polypropylene and extremely tough - the plant had not been reotted in all these years and it had managed to distort and then crack the pot.

Next was an *Ariocarpus kotchubeyanus* x *retusus* hybrid which bore a pink flower. *Ariocarpus* don't need anything special in terms of care - they are just extremely slow, so it takes many years to get a decent sized plant. *Rebutia einsteinii* v. *gonjianii* wasn't labelled - Stuart mentioned he really needs to find some time to label his plants properly. Earlier in the year, he had chopped this plant up and taken some 20 cuttings off the plant, but it had recovered well enough that you couldn't see where they had been taken off. He mentioned that when you visit other people's collections, you'll see two types of collection - ones where everything is looking nice but there's no propagation going on, and the other type where things look more disorganised but there are seeds and cuttings being grown and various other things happening.

He considered growing *Haworthias* and *Gasterias* almost like a cul-de-sac and you can't grow much after that. With a lot of the *Haworthias*, you need to grow them on to see them at their best. He showed a *Haworthia pumila* cultivar called "Tears of Angels" which he bought on Ebay in January 2010. It had really nice white markings on the leaves. However, as the leaves aged, the white fades, so on the older leaves the appearance is less striking. He mentioned he should have cut the centre out of the plant to encourage it to throw out a few fresh heads - and it was probably also possible to reroot some of the leaves. The plant looked better when it was younger. Stirling Baker saw his plant and asked Stuart to get one for him, with price being no object - so when he went to Steve Hammer last year, he asked Steve if he could get one and Steve found one. When Steve realised it was for Stirling, he told Stuart he could have it for free, and so Stuart asked him "how about one for me"? Steve was able to obtain another plant for him! He grows his *Haworthias* in pumice now, and it seems a good medium. Bob Potter has closed the Toobees nursery but he can still supply pumice.

Stuart mentioned that he gets a mystery box from Steve Hammer each year, where you just tell Steve in advance the types of plants you are interested in and how much you want to spend, and Steve will pick out various plants for you to fill the box (about the size of a cereal box with everything wrapped up in paper and the names written on the paper. Steve will then find suitable items to fill the box. One of the plants he got last year was labelled *Haworthia truncata* variegata - and when he looked the plant, it just seemed like a regular *truncata* with a tiny streak of yellow on one leaf. This year that plant had gone on to produce a fully variegated offset which was quite a surprise. He recalled that someone was selling green *H. limifolia* offsets from a variegated plant and it's likely that these are still capable of

producing variegated offsets. Another Haworthia he showed was bought in Lancashire at a Northern weekend. These were offsets of *Haworthia magnifica splendens* from John Frew, with a nice white form of leaf. However, they grew extremely slowly - he had the plant for 6-7 years and it had shown no signs of producing an offset.

Next was a hybrid Euphorbia which he had grown for a few years. Normally, you'd want a hybrid to look better than either of the parents - but this was a case where that rule didn't seem to apply. It was a hybrid of *Euphorbia bupleurifolia* x *Euphorbia suzannae*. The former looks like a pine cone with leaves on top and it's quite slow growing. *Euphorbia suzannae* makes a nice cluster. When you cross the two, you seem to lose the best features of both parents. The only reason he was continuing to grow this plant was that it was variegated. He had got it from Holland, having managed to spot it from a distance. It had sent out two completely yellow offsets, but those would not have been able to survive. There's a picture of it in Gordon Rowley's last book.

Next was a stick insect of a plant, which he had obtained from David Neville. Called *Seyrigia humbertii*, it comes from Madagascar. It is a member of the Cucurbitaceae and it grows from tubers underground. It produces minute flowers and the vertical pencil-like stems have velvety felt on them. Most plants from Madagascar are touchy but this had survived in a greenhouse which goes down to almost zero in the winter. He wasn't sure how large it grows, David said the largest one he had seen was 2 feet tall. The plant grows from cuttings of the stems, and these will go on to form tubers.

Some plants are winter growers. We know that plants don't like to be cold and wet at the same time but Tylecodons are one genus that tends to grow in the winter. The plants he had brought along came from Derek Tribble. When they come into leaf in the autumn is an indication of when they need watering to commence. A nice bonsai Pelargonium with a woody stem was growing in pumice. He grows quite a few Aeoniums, and the next plant was brought back from the USA - *Aeonium* cv "Emerald Ice" - it's a hybrid of *Aeonium tabuliforme* and it has variegation on the edge of each leaf.

An Aloe needed sprucing up. With cacti, you don't really need to do much maintenance, apart from removing any old flower remains, but succulents tend to need more attention. With Aloes, you need the old dried leaves, by peeling them peeling off. This particular plant was from Kelly Griffin (who has produced a lot of the new cultivars) but this was

never named. It remains small, has good colour and produces a few offsets. Next were a couple of plants he got from Holland. He likes variegates and buys them whenever he can. When in the larger nurseries, you often see rows and rows of plants, and then spot one which might be unusual. They usually sell plants by the trayful, so you might have to buy a whole tray even if you only want one plant. He showed us *Echeveria purporosum* with a streak of variegation. What he will do in the spring is cut the centre out and root the top and hope that variegated offsets form from the base. The next plant was found at a Dutch wholesale nursery. It looked like *Pachyphytum oviferum* but the leaves were the wrong colour, a shade of orange pink rather than the usual pale blue colour. It's possible that it might have been crossed with something like *Graptopetalum*. When he took the plant out of the pot, he found that there were multiple plantlets in the pot, with each plant having its own little bag of compost.

After the break, Stuart spent a few minutes explaining the judging for our table show. The first images he showed were a poster featuring "Cactus Club Killing" and a "comfy chair" which was a sofa fashioned after the ribs of a cactus. The first plant we saw was a *Whitesloanea crassa* grafted onto a hoodia. The Whitesloanea is supposed to be impossible to grow and he did lose it in the winter. Next was an explanation about his experience with ordering a digital projector from Amazon. His previous model (Benq) had lasted 10 years but the display matrix degraded and he decided to order a new one, made by Epson. This was ordered from Amazon and one Sunday he was drawing his curtains when he noticed a cardboard box under his car. He thought it was just some waste that needed to go in the recycling bin, but on checking, he found that it was the projector from Amazon. It had been delivered on a Sunday and the courier had not put any notification through his letterbox. It had been raining so that's perhaps why it was left under the car, but he could have easily driven over it if he had not noticed it.

We proceeded to see some pictures of the plants in his garden and his greenhouses. He had bought his house 25 years ago and at the time it consisted of just a lawn with some leylandii round the edge and a vegetable patch. He's planted many plants and we saw some fuchsias, followed by a *Ginkgo biloba*, sedum and Arum lily "Crowborough" which were all variegated. This was followed by a deciduous conifer, a variegated Camelia (he found this in Holland) and some acers. We saw the pathway to the greenhouse, with bamboo growing on both sides. When it's raining, it's like walking through a

carwash! A *Fatsia* had variegated leaves. We also saw a tree fern, magnolia and wisteria and a *leylandii* obtained from Biesheuvels in Europe. We saw the top of a *Sequoiadendron* (*Sequoia*) with horizontal branches - the tree is unusual because it looks like a rocket which has just taken off - the new branches right at the top are horizontal but the old ones are not. The tree was 50 foot tall but the stem is just 2-3 foot wide, apart from the base which is wider.

In his collection, we saw *Aeonium* cv. "Velour", looking extremely dull with plain green leaves, and he even considered throwing it out. But after being moved to another greenhouse and getting more light, the leaf colouring improved vastly, changing from green to a shade of red. His sister put some of them out in the garden and these were growing far better outdoors than in the greenhouse. Next was a variegated *Aeonium arboreum*, with several offsets. Every offset had slight differences in the amount and pattern of variegation.

His first greenhouse is 40 x 8 and is used for the nursery plants. the second was 40 x 10 and this housed 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of his collection, and it was also used for propagation. There was also a 8 x 6 greenhouse and a 8 x 12 B&Q lean to. He had put some shelving outside the greenhouse to grow mesembes but access to this was limited and it made it difficult to check how they were growing. He mentioned the only way to have a tidy greenhouse was to not grow anything. In the second greenhouse, the first 10 feet was reserved for plants to take cuttings from. We saw *Haworthia* and *Gasteria* on the floor. *Echeveria* cv "Rainbow" is a colourful plant which can be grown from cuttings but not the leaves. We saw an *Opuntia* from the Galapagos - however Stuart said that Doug Sizmur did a much better job of growing it than him. His collection occupies the remaining 30 x 10 area. Staging which is 3 feet wide on either side of the greenhouse is ideal - if it's any wider than that, you can't reach over the whole bench. He doesn't like growing plants under the staging, but *Haworthias* and *Gasterias* will grow acceptably there.

His oldest plant was a *Copiapoa cinerea*, purchased from Jim Bolton some 40 years ago. We saw his *Agaves* and these need a bit more looking after than the cacti - the dead leaves need removing. You also need to check for mealy in the crevices of the leaves. *Agave bracteosa* "Monterrey Frost" had green leaves with white edges. He had various varieties of *Agave attenuata*. By chopping these plants in half, you can force them to produce offsets. For best results you have to do this at the right time of the year, around March or April, to allow time for the offsets to form and grow to a reasonable size

before the winter. He had lots of the American *Aloe* hybrids, of the type bred by Kelly Griffin. Some are nicer than others and some are easier to grow. He's kept the nicer ones. *Aloe* cv "Christmas Sleigh" is new hybrid from Kelly Griffin, with dark green leaves and bright red teeth on the leaves. We also saw *Aloe* cv "Marmalade". He mentioned that to do proper plant labels, you need a laser printer and plastic labels on sheets, but it's a lot of effort since you really need to print off a whole sheet with 60+ names at a time.

We saw a couple of *Echeverias*, including *Echeveria* cv. "Compton's Carousel" which has nicely variegated green and yellow leaves. He sold some of these to a Dutch wholesaler a couple of years ago and they are now producing them in bulk - he doesn't know how they were able to produce so many so quickly. We saw his *Haworthias*, including many variegated examples. We also saw a group of different examples of *Haworthia truncata* - high prices are paid for some of the rare cultivars on Ebay.

He showed some of the variegated plants he had got from Southfields, and he suggested the nursery was well worth a visit. Bryan Goody grows a lot of hybrids and some of the seeds from the crosses can produce variegated plants. Their *Chamaecereus* x *Lobivia* crosses are just as colourful as the Schick *Echinopsis* hybrids. Another variegated plant he had got from Doug Sizmur was *Gymnocactus mandragora*. it has a rather strange growth habit with a cactus body growing on a spindly stem. A *Ferocactus* x *Thelocactus* hybrid produced by Miles Anderson was called "Spring Surprise" - this was a name inspired by Monty Python. The *Ferocactus* x *Stenocactus* which he had shown at the start of the talk was shown in flower. *Echinocereus knipellianus reyesii* is unusual in that it flowers from the new growth rather than the older areoles. *Ariocarpus retusus* had split its pot. We also saw the *Mammillaria bertholdii* from before. It has wonderful pectinate spines and a nice flower too - it produces good-sized flowers similar to those of *Mammillaria theresae* and he wondered how well it would do on its own roots. Next was a cristate *Rebutia* which was all mixed up - it was *Rebutia krainziana* which normally has red flowers, but here you had cristate orange flowers growing along the plant and also no spines on the plant.

The miniature north American cacti can be grown on grafts, they are usually a challenge to grow on their own roots. We saw *Toumeyia papyracantha* from Arizona. It grows in tufts of grass and it is very hard to find since the papery spines do look just like

dried grass. We also saw a cristate head of *Toumeya papyracantha*.

We saw more examples of *Haworthia truncata*, this time with fancy patterns on the ends of the leaves. One of the plants was from famous Japanese grower Kobayashi and “Snow Mountain” was the translation of the Japanese name. We saw more examples with selected markings and an ISI distributed *Haworthia* with textured leaves. We also saw two different examples of the same plant, grown in different amounts of sun.

We saw *Anacampseros albissima*. His *Astrophytums* were mainly in 4-5 inch pots and not quite up to show standard. We saw other *Astrophytums*, strange ones with lumps and bumps on them. We saw examples of *Astrophytum asterias* such as “Super Kabuto” and “Onzuka”. Another *Astrophytum* was trying to look like a *Lophophora*. Many of the weird plants should have smooth bodies and straight-edged ribs but these plants had weird lumps and chins growing all over the body. Some of these are stable and can actually be grown from seed. We saw variegated examples and also a red bodied plant which went green in the winter months. Another plant had red/green/yellow colouring. Doug Sizmur has many of these colourful plants, and he grows them from seed. We also saw an *Astrophytum* with a crest.

Next was an example of a deciduous cactus – he had an *Astrophytum caput-medusae* which loses all its stems every year, and it dies back to just a woody caudex, with new stems emerging in the following year. We also saw a variegated version of *A. caput-medusae*. A long spined chimera was a combination of *Astrophytum* and *Ferocactus*. The plant looked like it was suffering with a terrible infestation of scale.

We saw a few examples of *Mammillaria campotricha* - the ordinary form with a birds nest of spines, and also the Marnier form, named to honour the wife of Marnier-Lapostolle who managed the “Jardin Botanique des Cedres” in France. We also saw the extra-short spined form which he had shown to us earlier in the meeting.

Next was a monstrose *Homalocephala texensis* which was on a graft. These plants can be purchased as small plants for around 30 euros at ELK. We also saw some of the spiral growing *Cereus* cacti. Two of these were crossed and they produced seed which was viable, so it's now possible to grow these plants from seed. They start the spiral growth once they have reached a height of around 3 inches. We also saw a red coloured monstrose *Ariocarpus*, which

had been purchased at ELK. Unfortunately, the plant did not survive.

An *Ariocarpus kotchubeyanus* hybrid was a slow growing plant. A *turbincarpus* had no spines. Stuart mentioned that when grafting, it was better to use a square pot - it's much easier to keep the rubber hands on the pot if the pot is square. We saw a red cristate *Gymnocalycium* and a crested *Turbincarpus aloinsii*. We saw a saguaro (*Carnegiea gigantea*) and then varieties of the golden barrel cactus, *Echinocactus grusonii*. The normal form has golden spines, but it's possible to find white-spined forms, and short-spined and spineless forms. We saw some *Tylecodons* growing under the staging, along with *Gasterias* and *Haworthias*. *Agaves* can scorch, so some shading may be necessary at certain times of the year. We saw various succulents, including a variegated *Ledebouria socialis*, followed by several *Aeoniums*, including *Aeonium* cv “Mardi Gras” which can have striking red, yellow and green colouring. In dull weather, if *Aeoniums* are being grown too close together, there is a possibility they remain too moist and a possibility of rot, so he showed the plants spaced out in a tray, to allow them to dry out.

We saw some variegated mesembs. Propagating plants from cuttings is a much faster way to get new plants compared to growing from seed, and he doesn't sow much seed these days. A picture showed coffee stirrers being used as labels and supports, and Stuart said he does use quite a few them for labelling small plants and cuttings. We saw *Glottiphyllum* and *Adromischus*, and a variegated *Hoya kerrii*, which has heart shaped leaves. A plant that he found with green flowers turned out to be a florist type *Kalanchoe*.

Time was running out so we hurried through the final slides. These showed *Echeverias*, *Crassulas* and a variegated *Aloe*, followed by a cristate *Pachypodium* and a cristate *Agave*. We saw *Echeveria* “Rainbow” again – it is somewhat unstable and can change colours depending on how it's cultivated. We saw variegated plants of *Haworthia maughanii* and also a close up of the offset which grew on the “variegated” *Haworthia truncata* that Steve Hammer had picked out for him. We saw some *Gasterias*, a cristate *Sempervivum* and a variegated *Sempervivum*, followed by a variegated *Yucca* in the garden. We finished with a conifer and a “smiling” cactus, which had grown offsets and resembled a face with a smile.

Vinay Shah



**Table Show Results**

There were 14 entries in the November table show, and 7 entries for "Plants in Flower".

	<b>Cacti – Copiapoa</b>	<b>Succulents – Echeveria</b>
Open	(1) G Penrose Copiapoa ahremephiana	(1) B Beckerleg Dudleya brittonii
	(2) B Beckerleg Copiapoa krainziana	(2) M Shaw Echeveria Mexican Giant
	(3) I Biddlecombe Copiapoa cinerea	(3) I Biddlecombe E. agavoides Red Edge
Intermediate	(1) B Beckerleg Copiapoa cinerea	(1) B Beckerleg Echeveria laui
	(2) G Penrose C. hypogaea barquitenis	(2) B Beckerleg Echeveria laui
	(3) I Biddlecombe Copiapoa krainziana	(3) I Biddlecombe E. cuspidata zaragoza

<b>Cacti/Succulent in Flower</b>
(1) G Penrose Conophytum herreanthus
(2) M Fox Rousell Fockea edulis
(3) I Biddlecombe Lithops olivacea

*Ivor Biddlecombe*

**Table Show 2018 – Overall Results****Open Section – Cacti (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Trophy)**

1) B Beckerleg	32
2) I Biddlecombe	27
3) M Stevenson	5
4) G Penrose	5

**Open Section – Succulents (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Trophy)**

1) B Beckerleg	33
2) I Biddlecombe	20
3) T Radford	17
4) M Stevenson	9

**Intermediate Section – Cacti (Peter Down 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Jubilee Trophy)**

1) B Beckerleg	34
2) I Biddlecombe	20
3) T Radford	9
4) G Penrose	8

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

1) I Biddlecombe	34
2) B Beckerleg	33
3) T Radford	19
4) A Jankovec	10

**Ladies Cup (highest points total/Female entrant)**

1) M Stevenson	36
2) A Jankovec	10
3) M Fox-Rousell	3

**Solent Cup (Cactus or Succulent in flower)**

1) B Beckerleg	45
2) I Biddlecombe	13
3) M Stevenson	11
4) R Caddy	4
4) G Penrose	4

*Ivor Biddlecombe*

## Next Month's Meeting

Due to the timing of New Year's Day, our first meeting of 2018 will be held on January 8<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will feature short talks by branch members, and if you have a subject that you would like to talk about (even if only for a few minutes), please let David Neville know as soon as possible.

We will have access to conventional and digital projectors, so members are welcome to bring along slides, or a memory stick containing digital pictures. You can also bring along live plants, if you want to talk about those!

The January Table Show will consist of the **Echinocactus** group (cacti) and the **Aloe** group (succulents), along with "plant in flower". Please note that members can submit more than one entry in any of the classes, and that points will be earned for each placed entry.

The table show classes use the classifications from the *Guide to Shows 10<sup>th</sup> Edition* (contact me if you don't have a copy of this).

The Echinocactus group includes *Echinocactus*, *Ferocactus*, *Homalocephala*, and *Leuchtenbergia*.

The Aloe group contains *Aloe*, *Aloiampelos*, *Aloidendron*, *Bulbine*, *Chamaealoe*, *Kumara* and *Lomatophyllum*.

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



## Forthcoming Events

Tue	4 <sup>th</sup>	Dec	Southampton	Annual General Meeting, followed by Christmas Social
Sat	8 <sup>th</sup>	Dec	Isle of Wight	Annual General Meeting followed by American Supper
Tue	8 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Southampton	Members' Mini Talks - short talks by branch members
Sat	12 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Isle of Wight	no meeting
Sat	19 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Portsmouth	Thelocactus and their cultivation – Julian Cooke
Tue	5 <sup>th</sup>	Feb	Southampton	A brief history of cactus & succulent growing – Tom Radford
Sat	9 <sup>th</sup>	Feb	Isle of Wight	Your Pictures and Slides
Sat	16 <sup>th</sup>	Feb	Portsmouth	Origin and Evolution of the Cactaceae – Prof. David Martill

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

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