



# Desert Breeze

Newsletter of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society

May 2016

Thursday, May 5, 2016 at 7:00 PM

## “Untangling the complex evolutionary history of the promiscuous prickly pears and other cacti, where did they all come from?”

Presented by Lucas C. Majure, Biologist of New World Succulents, Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix, AZ

Lucas grew up in central Mississippi where he developed a love for all things natural and a deep connection with the flora of the southeastern United States. It was there that his fascination with cacti began during his master’s work at Mississippi State University. He then migrated to the University of Florida where he earned a Ph.D. working on the evolutionary history of the prickly pear cacti. He is now a research botanist at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, where he has continued to focus on prickly pear cacti throughout the Americas, but with keen focuses on continental North America and the Caribbean region. He currently has ongoing projects on the cactus floras of Cuba and Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles, as well as numerous projects in the southwestern United States.

For anyone interested in seeing Lucas and learning about his research and current projects, please plan to attend this presentation. You will also enjoy being with lots of friends, enjoy some great refreshments, win some great plants as well as obtaining a free plant during your departure.



*Melocactus matanzanus*



*Opuntia lutea, PV, Costa Rica*



Sky Islands Public High School • 6000 E. 14th St.

Thursday, June 7, 2016 at 7:00pm

Program presentation

“Mexico, The Hidden Treasures of Coahuila”

Presented by Woody Minnich



## President's Message

Sonoran XI was a great success thanks to the many members who volunteered. I always worry about events like this as to how many members will help. You are amazing and appreciated. From all the comments received everyone who attended any of the events thought highly of our efforts.

It is very clear that we do need someone in charge of volunteers who would coordinate these efforts. It is just a matter of keeping a record of willing members and their interests. We also need to do some training so that volunteers feel more comfortable and knowledgeable about the whole effort.

Sonoran XI included many separate events all at the same time and all working together.

We started out on Friday night with a first, a special sale to members and registrants. This was a 15% off sale and the purpose was to support our 23 plus vendors by making sure our members and registrants had an opportunity to make first purchases. The Society absorbed the 15% discount on all purchases.

Did you see that we had a 40 X 100 ft. tent in the parking lot of Hotel Tucson in which all the vendors were located? There were some last minute space issues at the Hotel and this was the very best answer to the problem. It actually worked out for the best and everyone liked the tent concept. It provided the vendors and the customers easy access to load and unload. We also brought in, with the help of some great volunteers, more than 300 rescued plants that had been stored at other locations. All but a few very small Saguaros sold. That was Fantastic. The sale went great all Saturday and till 1:30 on Sunday.

This year besides full registration, it was possible to sign up for individual meals, programs and workshops. There were more than 180 participants at one or more events. The programs and workshops were terrific. We were able to accommodate everyone who wanted a particular program.

There were 2 lunches and speakers and our special Saturday night dinner followed by a very special speaker. Peter Gierlach better known as "Petey Mesquitey" thrilled the guests with his special humor, songs, poetry and thoughts about the desert we live in. It was incredible! That's the only way I can describe my feelings. The second most important thing about his presentation was that Petey was the dinner speaker at Sonoran I, 20 years ago. Margaret Pope and I are the only ones left who planned that event and were here for the Saturday night performance.

The food was great at both the lunches and dinner and the Hotel Staff did a great job to accommodate all our needs. We have a very special friend at the Hotel who has been involved with 10 out of the 11 conferences and makes us feel at home.

During all these activities we still had a wonderful show and silent auction (which raised over \$1,200). We didn't rent trucks this year but still had our members bring in great plants that the public judged. It was wonderful.

So thank you to all the Vendors, workshop presenters, speakers, donors of silent auction plants and to all those who brought in plants for our show plus special thanks to the chairpersons who made this all possible. Thank you Dale Johnson (vendors), Vonn Watkins (speakers and workshops), Doug Roswell (facilities and equipment) Joie Giunta (plant show and silent auction), Donna Ellis (rescue sales), Marti Harow (registration), Maxine Goodman (publicity) and all their volunteers.

I need to thank so many others who generously gave their time during the conference, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Let's do it again!

Dick Wiedhopf, President

## Acknowledgement of Contributions

The names below represent the Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society members and friends whose donations helped make this year a success. We extend our sincere thanks for your support.

### Education

Vernon & Diane Kliewer

### Florilegium

Mary Ann Jones

### Pima Prickly Park

Lynn Mckevers Andrews & Family

### Unrestricted General Fund

Kevin & Helen Barber

Scott Sherman

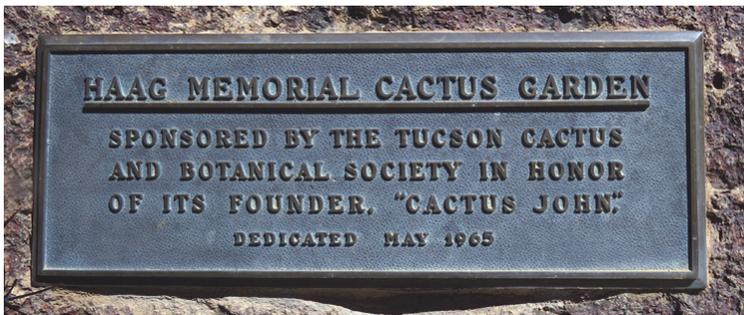


Lucas Majure, *Opuntia basilaris*, Utah

# The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum's Haag Cactus Garden Celebrates its 50 Years With a New Look



*The Haag Cactus Garden is home to 138 species of cacti - Credit Nancy Serensky*



*A plaque dedicated to founder Cactus John Haag. Credit M Paganelli*

Dedicated in May 1965, this unique garden is named in honor of "Cactus" John Haag, founder of the Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society and curator of plants at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum from 1957-1959.

Home to 138 species of cacti, including some of Mr. Haag's personal collection and several rare and endangered species, the garden was created to help educate people about cacti and other succulent plants of the Sonoran Desert Region. Celebrating its 50th birthday, the garden has undergone some wonderful enhancements under the leadership of Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Horticulturist Jason Wiley.

Working with a number of volunteers, Wiley has spent the past two years completely reworking the garden, with an all-new look and a broader array of species. "We've been working very hard on getting the Cactus Garden looking more dramatic, inspiring and manicured," says Wiley.

Three architectural oxidized metal planters at the entrance are just one of the enhancements to the Garden. These dramatic and sculptural planters clearly delineate the garden's entrance, welcoming guests and providing a visual contrast to the soft colors and contours of the vegetation.

Since May of 2014, over a thousand new specimens have been added to the garden –an increase of more than 40 percent. Some of these new additions include several visually stunning "Flying Saucer" (*Trichocereus* hybrid) Torch Cacti, which add drama and beauty to the Garden. These cacti have been cleverly placed so that they are highly visible from the entrance, but far enough back into the Garden so that guests are drawn in to get a closer look at the breathtaking blooms. Other additions include barrels, hedgehogs, *Thelocactus*, and several unusual forms of *Senita*: a "Woolly Rhino" whose blond bristles go all the way to the ground; and "Jim's Giant," which has enormously fat arms. Wiley has also planted numerous golden hedgehogs rescued from the Silver Bell Mine where a leach field is being installed. The garden is also home to the Pima Pineapple Cactus (*Coryphantha robustispina*), and *Echinocactus horizonthalonius nicholii*, two of the Sonoran Desert's endangered species.



*The Chihuahuan snowball (*Thelocactus macdowellii*) is just one of many cacti in the garden-credit ASDM*

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Another aesthetic addition is a “river” of Creeping Devil (*Stenocereus eruca*) that will flow through the Garden. The display created by these dramatic, ground-hugging cacti provides some visual continuity running throughout the garden, showcasing these rare examples of desert flora. Since the “river” is still a work in progress, Wiley is seeking donations of cuttings or specimens of this unique southwest succulent.

Also contributing to the Garden’s aesthetics is what you don’t see: the popup sprinklers that dotted the area. In a continuing process, much of the garden was converted to drip irrigation, which not only eliminated the old popups but also improved the efficiency of the watering system. This style of irrigation dramatically increases the depth into the soil that can be watered without it running off, and prevents any minerals from depositing onto the specimens over time and making them appear dull.

Other subtle changes include the addition of soil in the barrel cactus area (8 yards of Native Plant Mix) that increases the height of the barrel mounds by 12-24 inches in different areas.



*A stream of Creeping Devils (*Stenocereus eruca*) enhance a dry wash - credit M. Paganelli*

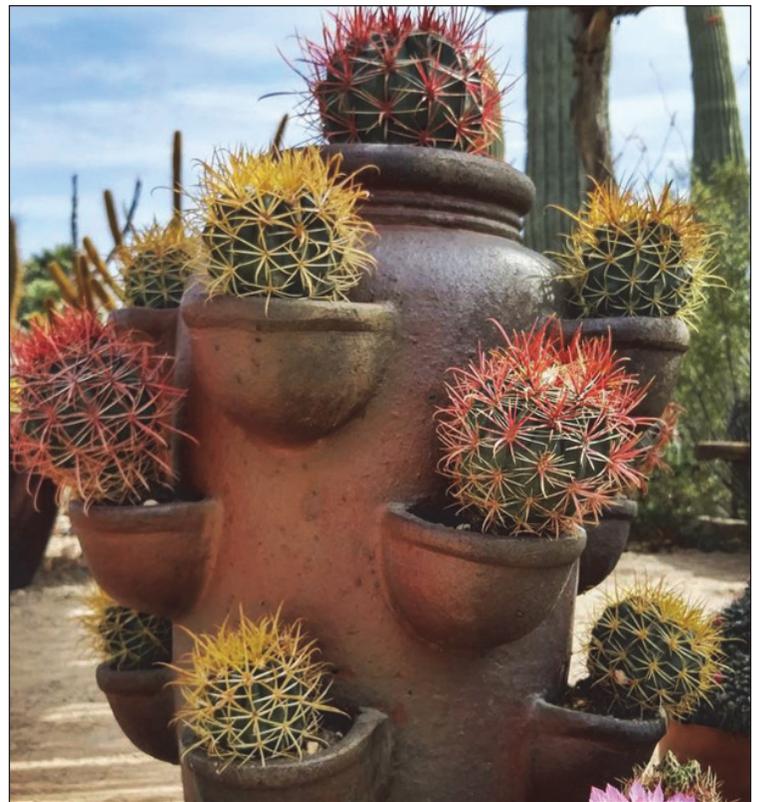
This makes the topography much more interesting and also improves the soil for the growth of the new specimens. Several areas have also been topdressed with new rock and local pecan shells for a finished manicured look. Both of these added materials will also help with any evaporation from the ground and erosion. The pecan shells around non-Tucson native cacti will provide relief from the heat and keep surface light from sunburning the plants.

These exciting developments have resulted in a 320% increase in Garden visitation, with guests spending much more time walking the paths, exploring and learning.

Future plans for the Garden include adding more mass plantings of cacti, contouring the topography, adding architectural elements, and educating guests through additional signage. Wiley’s personal goal is “to inspire people to plant dramatic and sustainable succulent gardens while also adding habitat for both humans and wildlife to live together, with an emphasis on regionally appropriate plants.”

No doubt Mr. Haag would be proud of his namesake garden today as the Desert Museum continues to build upon his vision. The 1965 Cactus Chatter Bulletin predicted “John’s garden will be a source of lasting pleasure and education to generations of visitors.” This year a number of supporters have contributed to making these exciting Garden renovations possible. With ongoing support, the Garden will continue to blossom and grow for the next 50 years.

*(For more information, please contact Cree Zischke, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Director of Philanthropy, 520-883-3039, czischke@desertmuseum.org)*



*A strawberry pot with red and yellow barrels is a garden feature. Credit Jason Wiley*



Vibrant Flying Saucers (*Trichocereus Hybrid*) lend color to the landscape - credit Jason Wiley



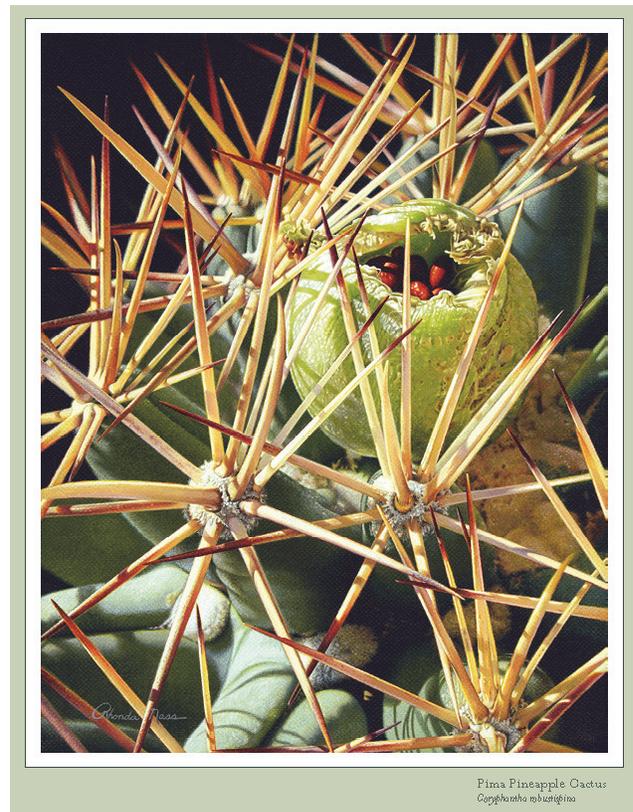
Wildflowers are interspersed with endangered *Echinocactus horizontalis nicholii* - Credit Jason Wiley



Eye catching CoreTen oxidized metal planters at the entrance to the Garden - credit Jason Wiley



Nichols Golden Hedgehogs Rescued from Silverbell Mine now have a new home - Credit Jason Wiley



The endangered Pima Pineapple Cactus - credit Rhonda Nass

**TO ALL TCSS MEMBERS.....We are organizing..... at this time..... a BUILD-A-CACTUS kit building production line. Join us and bring a friend.**



TCSS Education Committee



TCSS Education Committee



TCSS Education Committee

**Please consider joining your TCSS friends for fun and an active, busy, and productive volunteering for the TCSS Education OUTREACH on Sunday, May 22.**

We have supplies/materials, boxes and a plan to prepare 1000 kits that will last us one year. We expect it to take 4 hours to make 1000 kits and box them for use at our outreach events.



**We need your help and will appreciate it too! Snacks and drinks will be provided. We even have 3 raffle prizes that you would love to win!**

**Pick a shift and email Caryl to sign up ASAP!**

Shift 1..... 9:00 - 11:30

Shift 4..... 9 - 12

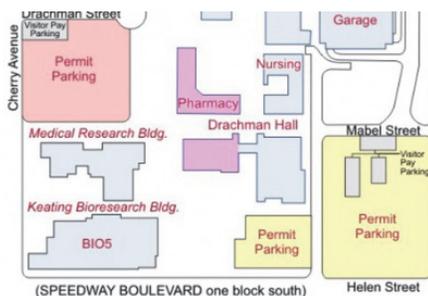
Shift 2..... 10:00 - 12:30

Shift 5.... 10 - 1

Shift 3..... 11- 1:30

Shift 6.... ???????

[cryljones13@mac.com](mailto:cryljones13@mac.com) or [education@tucsoncactus.org](mailto:education@tucsoncactus.org)



**University of Arizona  
College of Pharmacy  
1295 N Martin Ave**

**Signs will clearly mark the way to the 3rd floor.  
Parking is very convenient.... off Helen St.**



**10 foot tall Cardon (Pachycereus pringlei)  
donated by Stuart and Wendy Bengson was transplanted  
from their property to the University of Arizona campus.**



*Donor with Cardon at it's old home on the northwest side.*



*Old Pueblo Cactus' transplant crew preparing plant for transport.*



*Loading plant on to truck*



*Cardon secured on two wheeled cart.*



*Moving into place at UA*



*Setting upright.*

*Donor with Cardon in its new home near the Tree Ring Lab on UA campus.*



**Cacti Rescued - Since 1999**  
**363 Rescues - 26,095 Volunteer Hours**

Please see our Website Calendar for the next rescued cactus sale. They are scheduled at various times during the year based on our inventory.

**TCSS Club Members receive a 10% discount**

We need your "Eyes and Ears" to help us find new Cactus Rescue sites. Please email us as much information as you can from new project signs or from other sources to **Site@TucsonCactus.org**. Attach a photo of the sign if you can. Note, we do not remove plants from residences.

## May 2016

### Thursday, May 5, 2016 7:00pm

"Untangling the complex evolutionary history of the promiscuous prickly pears and other cacti, where did they all come from?"

Presented by Lucas C. Majure, Biologist of New World Succulents, Desert Botanical Garden, Phoenix, AZ

### Tuesday, May 10, 2016 7:00pm

Board meeting at the U of A College of Pharmacy



*Trichocereus hybrid, flying saucer*  
Photo by Karen Keller

### TCSS BOARD

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(terms expire December 31 of year indicated)

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**Field Trips/tours** Rob Romero/Joie Guinta

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**Newsletter Editor:** Karen Keller • [runbunny@cox.net](mailto:runbunny@cox.net)

**Deadline for June newsletter text or photos:**

**Thursday, May 19, 2016**

#### TCSS Web Page:

[www.tucsoncactus.org](http://www.tucsoncactus.org)

**Webmaster:** Keimpe Bronkhorst • [webmaster@Tucsoncactus.org](mailto:webmaster@Tucsoncactus.org)

For additional information call: (520) 256-2447

**Everyone is Welcome!**

Bring your friends, join in the fun and meet the cactus and succulent community.

## May Meeting Refreshments

Those with family names beginning with M- Z, please bring your choice of refreshments to the meeting. Your generous sharing will be greatly appreciated and enjoyed!