



# THE OFFSET

**SEPTEMBER 2014**

Webpage <https://sites.google.com/site/cocssok/>

*Echinocereus reichenbachii subsp. baileyi*  
in the Wichita Mountains NWR, Oklahoma.  
Mount Scott in the background. Photo by  
Michael Douglas

## NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL OKLAHOMA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

### OFFICERS

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**Meeting:** Third Thursday of the month at 7 pm. At the Will Rogers Garden Center at 3400 NW 36<sup>th</sup> in Oklahoma City (except for the month of our Show&Sale, picnic and Christmas party).

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## CLUB NEWS



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

September, 2014

Rod Mosel was our guest speaker for the August meeting and I must admit that I was a little disappointed in the turnout for the evening from members. If we hadn't had 3 guests and a new member there, the club would sure have looked rather pitiful with 5 people sitting there. Rod, however, had very nice things to say about our club and the work we have done over the years with the conservatory. His company, American Plant Products, did the reconstruction on the new conservatory and he mentioned several times that our plants certainly added to the facility especially since they are basically the only ones in it. He has been doing some work on greenhouses in Arizona at a couple of universities this past year and with recurring trips to the area his appreciation and interest in cactus and succulents have grown immensely and he had several questions for us.

The Annual Picnic is this month at our home around 6:00pm - come when you can. Directions are here in the newsletter. We will provide chicken, hamburgers (fixings for the burgers), and drinks. Members/guests can bring a side dish of their choice - baked beans, potato salad, chips, desert, etc. **I would appreciate some kind of RSVP** so if you want to include what you want to bring, I can let you know if someone else has already picked that item. I had mentioned playing American Pickers but think we will forgo that idea for now and perhaps do it at a meeting in 2015. It's about time to think about bringing in some of those plants for the winter so if you have questions about that, there will be members available to answer most of them.

Election of Officers is in October and we are in desperate need of a secretary. Would someone step forward and accept this position? P L E A S E The duties are basically taking notes and doing Minutes for the meetings and attending planning meetings. There is no brain science required nor a degree in Secretarial Engineering. There is no health insurance but we could talk about a bonus. The position is not gender bias and with our 'laid back' club, the position is not a demanding or time consuming one. Please think on this and ask not what the club is doing for you, but what you could add to the club --- *sorry, couldn't help myself.*

Niki Furrh

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### New Member

We would like to welcome new member Constance Smiley.

**CLUB NEWS****CENTRAL OKLAHOMA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
AUGUST 21, 2014**

The club gathered at 7:00pm at the Will Rogers Garden Center to hear speaker, Rod Mosel. Rod is a local businessman (American Plant Products) who has been in the plant garden arena all his life (his parents owned Mosel's - a local plant store for many years) and continues in this field. His business is mostly to retailers although he does make some exceptions on certain items. Rod has a wide range of knowledge and has traveled the world investigating new and improved species of plants & products. He has developed a widely known greenhouse construction business and has been involved with several universities and business both in and out of the state of Oklahoma.

The speaker concluded around 8:10pm and we adjourned briefly for refreshments brought by Niki Furrh and purchased by the club.

A short business meeting was brought to order at 8:20pm. The treasurer was unable to attend the meeting. A new constitution has been developed by Treasurer Peggy Anglin for tax purposes and this will be emailed to members. It requires a vote of active members and hopefully we can take care of this at the September meeting. (The old constitution written in the 60's was illegible in areas - the new one is basically the same writing.)

Members were reminded of officer elections in October. Guest speakers are scheduled for October and November and details will follow as Rosario Douglas (our editor & VP) gets them.

The Annual Picnic is at the Furrhs on September 18th around 6:00pm - come when you can. Details elsewhere in the newsletter.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40pm and room cleaned up.

Submitted by Niki Furrh



ANNUAL PICNIC  
HOUSE

SEPTEMBER

BEGINNING AT

**No Program this month.** Instead we are having our annual picnic at Tony and Niki's house. .



We will provide chicken, hamburgers (fixings for the burgers), and drinks. Members/guests can bring a side dish of their choice - baked beans, potato salad, chips, desert.

Tony & Niki Furrh  
6717 Chelsey Lane  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132  
722-1718



On Council Road (going either North or South), between NW 50th Street and Wilshire Blvd, you will come to **NW 63rd Street**, which is **WEST** on Council across from Wiley Post Airport. *There are signs indicating NW 63rd and a decorative lamp post at the corner.* You will drive across a city 'switch-back' bridge and continue driving West on NW 63rd until you come to the last turn into the neighborhood on the RIGHT, Green Meadow Lane. Turn onto Green Meadow Lane and drive about one block and you will run into Chelsey Lane on the left. Turn onto Chelsey and drive to 6717.



## CACTUS AND SUCCULENT HAPPENINGS IN THE REGION



**September 18th - Annual picnic at Niki and Tony Furrh's house**

**October 16<sup>th</sup> - Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society monthly meeting at 7:00 pm at the Will Rogers Garden Center.**

**Program: Will Rogers Gardens - Planning for the next Millennium by Melinda MacMillan**

**November 20<sup>th</sup> Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society monthly meeting at 7:00 pm at the Will Rogers Garden Center.**

**Program: By Steve Owens, co-owner of Bustani Plant Farm in Stillwater.**

**December 11<sup>th</sup> - Christmas party. Location to be announced.**



Issue number 12 of the Cactus explorer is available at:

<http://www.cactusexplorers.org.uk/journal1.htm>

## ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

*by Mike and Rosario Douglas***18 days in the Canary Islands as independent travellers part II****El Hierro**

This island was described as “a lost island in the Atlantic Ocean” by the owner of the rural house we stayed at.



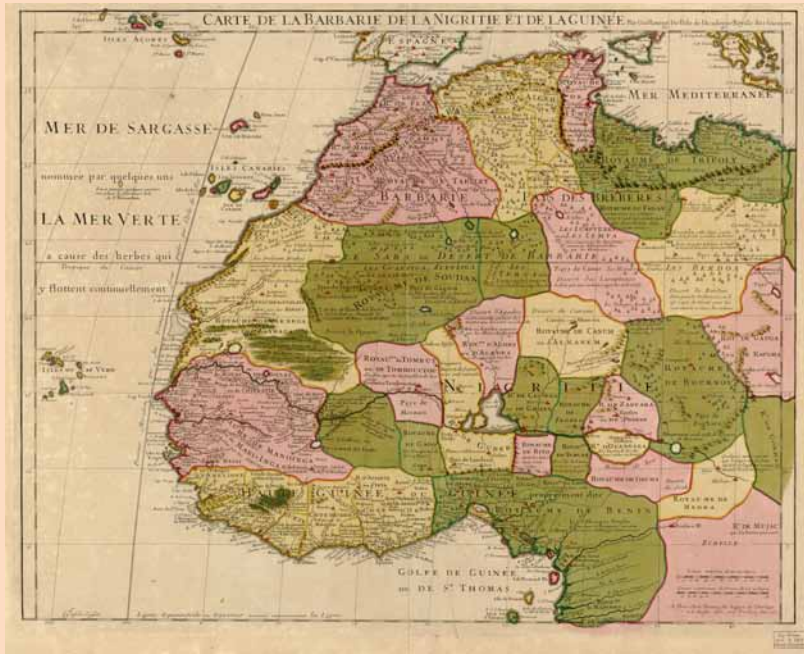
After our visit to the island of Tenerife we headed for the island of El Hierro. Getting to El Hierro proved more complicated than anticipated due to a departure port change at the last minute. This necessitated renting again the car we had just returned and driving over an hour to the northern port of Santa Cruz in Tenerife. The change, due to high swells that prevented docking the ferry at the tourist port necessitated the inconvenience of driving to an unfamiliar location. The ferry also then had a longer distance to cover. As a result we left Tenerife much later than expected. The large ferry only had 56 passengers and the ocean was pretty rough at times (Dramamine was useful although it made us pretty sleepy). After about 3 hours, we arrived at El Hierro and rented our car. Fortunately, the car rental procedure at Canary Island ports is very easy and fast. We made it to our rural house, an hour away from the port, after midnight.



Upper right: The island of El Hierro shown in red.

Lower left: Closer Google earth view of El Hierro. North is up. The crater-shaped slope on the north side is a huge landslide scarp (long ago). The most recent volcanic activity is on the south tip of the island, followed by the western tip. But all parts show volcanic features.





El Hierro is not very well served by the ferry connections and flying there is not that easy (irregular flights). Only one of the two ferry companies goes to El Hierro. As a result it is the least visited of the Canary islands.

The name "El Hierro" does not mean iron (hierro being the Spanish word for iron) as many believe. It is not well known where the name comes from, but some believe the word comes from the Guanche language spoken by the Bimbaches, the earliest inhabitants of the islands. In his translation of "Le Canarien", Richard Henry Mayor, mentioned that the name **hero** meant

cistern in the Guanche language. It is believed that the Bimbaches had to construct cisterns in order to save and store fresh water-mostly from winter rains. It is hypothesized that the word hero could have come to be Hierro overtime. (*Wikipedia*)

El Hierro is the smallest and westernmost of the Canary Islands and it also has the smallest population, about 11000 according to the last census in 2003. El Hierro is also known as the Meridian Island because, before Columbus's discovery of America, this island was considered the westernmost point ("the edge") of the known world. You can drive on a paved road to the Orchilla lighthouse, which is close to the small monument marking the zero meridian (no longer zero in the current world geography) A beautiful drive and a very empty part of the island enhanced the feeling of being the only people there. It is a long drive on slow, winding roads, and the final section was a somewhat rough dirt road (we actually turned around before reaching the monument).

Upper left: The map is Guillaume Delisle North West Africa 1707 – public domain

On the right: Faro de Orchilla near the monument that commemorates the old zero meridian. Photos by Mike Douglas





El Hierro was designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO and 60% of its territory is protected. There are plans to make the island completely energy independent by using wind energy. The island has a variety of habitats including recent lava flows, pine forests, moist laurisilva forests and grasslands - mostly due to human disturbance. There are a number of endemic succulents and lizards such as the giant El Hierro lizard (*Gallotia simonyi*) - there is a captive breeding program designed to try to reintroduce this lizard into the wild.



Like the other Canary islands, El Hierro is the result of volcanic activity and there are areas where nice volcanic landscapes can be appreciated. One such lava flow not far from our guesthouse was covered by hundreds to thousands of *Aeonium valverdense*, found only in El Hierro. In recent years there has been volcanic activity and a small offshore submarine eruption took place in 2011 near the town of La Restinga.



Upper left: Canary Island pine forest – almost no understory due to frequent fires. Upper right: Grasslands (agricultural fields) – we are above the clouds at this site.

Lower left: An example of the Laurisilva forest, note the large ferns that grow in this very moist environment.

Lower right: *Aycaea sp.* growing in the Laurisilva forest. Photos by Mike Douglas





We spent 4 days on El Hierro. During this time we became enchanted by the beauty of the landscapes as well as the plants we saw during our daily drives. The miradores (lookouts) provided impressive views when fog was not present. Due to the small population and the more difficult access to this island, tourists are less numerous than on the other Canary islands. At many locations we had the place to ourselves.



Upper left: volcanic landscape with *Aeonium valverdense* growing on it.

Lower left: The very steep slopes on the north side of the island.



On the right: The endemic *Aeonium valverdense*.  
And a Closer view of *A. valverdense*



Perhaps this combination of beauty and relaxation is the reason we consider this a special island. The roads are sometimes quite narrow, but in good condition and the traffic is very light. The relatively small size of the island allows fast access to the island's different habitats – though you must climb or descend *a lot* – the highest parts of the island are near 5000 ft elevation.

As on Tenerife, we selected a local house in a small town called Pinar de el Hierro. This house was lovingly restored by the grandson of the original owners. It was small but had all we needed and the owner being an aficionado of succulents had all kinds of *Aeonium* and other succulents scattered thorough out the balconies and small patio, even on the stairs. The town was very nice and small, so much so that we were able to easily walk to the supermarket. The gas station (one of only 3 on the island) was closed for 3 hours for the afternoon siesta.



Upper right: The road to our house. *This was a two-way road.* Middle left: View of el Pinar del Hierro. Middle right: A view of our house (solar water heater on roof). Lower left: Mike enjoying the patio at our house. Lower right: Patio and some of the succulents that were everywhere at our house.



As was the case throughout our trip I managed to cook most of our meals and at El Hierro we were treated to homegrown potatoes from the owner's garden and to fresh eggs. Having a fully equipped kitchen allowed us to sample some of the excellent local goat cheeses made on the different islands as well as other foods such as chorizos. The cheeses from El Hierro were particularly good.

I should mention that internet was available at all the lookouts and tourist areas throughout the island.



Upper right: My best effort for dinner using local ingredients.

Middle left: Dry southwest area of the island.

Middle right: *Senecio kleinia*.

Lower left: *Euphorbia canariensis* growing near the port at lower and warmer elevations.

Lower right: *Euphorbia balsamifera* near the port.





On our drives we also saw:

Upper left: *Greenovia aurea*.

Upper right: closer view of *G. alba*.

Lower left: *Aeonium spathulatum*. Note the size 6 ring next to the plant.

Lower right: *A. spathulatum* growing in the rock cracks.





Aeoniums were also present. During our daily drives we found :

Upper left: *Aeonium hierrense* (an endemic to El Hierro), Upper right: *Aeonium holochrysum*.

Middle right: closer view of *A. holochrysum*.

Middle left: *Aeonium longithyrsus* (an endemic) growing on a road cut next to the road.

Lower left: A closer view of *A. longithyrsus*.



Sun, some fog, white stone house in small towns, amazing views, beautiful coastal areas, volcanic landforms, pine forest, moist forest and a nice assortment of succulents in a variety of habitats plus the feeling of safety and relaxation are some of the reasons I won't soon forget our time on El Hierro.



Upper left: View from a mirador, Upper right: view along the coast. Middle right: The laurisilva forest.

Lower left: Rosario next to *Aeonium longithyrsum*.

Lower right: White houses in El Pinar del Rio. 14

To be continued..



## The genus *Greenovia*

A genus of 4 species in the family Crassulaceae, 3 of which are found on the island of Tenerife. Plants have fleshy leaves arranged in rosettes that can close during dry periods. Closely related to the genus *Aeonium*. Plants produce offsets readily and the main plant dies after flowering (monocarpic). Plants grow on rocky walls or cliffs. Flowers are yellow.

Sources: Wikipedia and **Succulent plants of the Canary Islands**, identification easy guide by Joel Lode



All photos taken at El Hierro except for the photo at bottom right which was taken in La Palma.

photos show *Greenovia aurea*.

## THE BOTANICAL CORNER

by Rosario Douglas



**Auricled** Having small ear-like appendages

**Australis** Southern, from the South

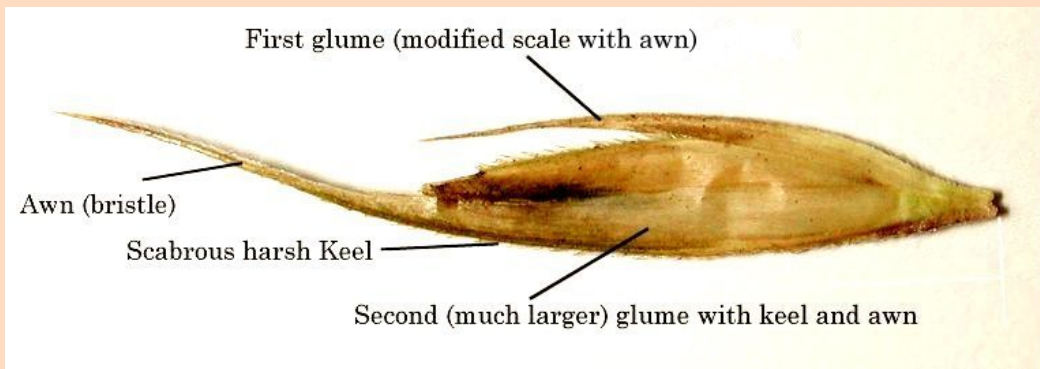
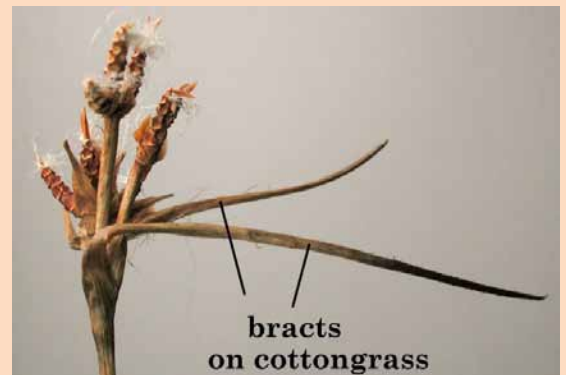
**Autogamy** Self-fertilisation or self-pollination

**Autumnalis** Flowering in the autumn

**Awn** A bristle-like appendage especially on the floral bracts.

**Note:** A bract is a modified leaf against the base of a flower or an inflorescence

**Axil** The upper angle formed between the stem or branch and any other branch, leaf, tubercle, or other organ arising from them



Middle right photo from a botanical glossary at:  
<http://www.enjoybirds.com/HomePublishing/GramGloss.htm>

Lower left photo from the same source as above.

Terms from a book by W. Taylor Marshall and R.S. Woods. The book is titled, **Glossary of succulent plant terms**, published in 1938. The Cactus Museum at [www.CactusMuseum.com](http://www.CactusMuseum.com), Wikipedia, A glossary put together by John Chippindale of Leeds England. Also terms from CactiGuide.com at <http://cactiguide.com/glossary/>.