



THE OFFSET

December 2015

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

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

IN THIS ISSUE

Club News	pp 2-5
Succulent Plants	pp 6-9
Book review	pp 10
Cultivation corner	pp 11
The Botanical corner	pp 12

CLUB NEWS



Dear readers;

Niki wishes you all a Merry Christmas. She will be back with her president's message in January.

Mike and I are back after a long (75 day) trip to South Africa and Madagascar. While in South Africa we had the opportunity to visit the west coast area and catch some of the last patches of Namaqualand blooms. The flowers were truly impressive, not just because of the sheer number of blooms per square meter, but also because of the diversity of colors and patterns. Many flowers have dark spots at the base of the corolla which look remarkably like small insects.

Madagascar was another story, our 18-day succulent plant tour was disappointing due to the lack of enough good places with "quality habitats" to see succulents. Many areas of Madagascar are very degraded and it is not easy to access undisturbed areas. The very bad roads, long driving days with insufficient stops, the ever-present poverty, and overall too-few succulents made this trip less desirable than we had expected. We are working on a web page that will have much more details and pictures of our 18-day trip. For now I leave you with a few pictures of Madagascar (on the next page).

Hope you can all make it to the Christmas party on December 17.

Rosario Douglas

Membership Dues: It is \$10 for individuals and \$15 for families. You can mail the check to Peggy Anglin or you can pay at the Christmas party. Let Peggy know if you have a new email address or a new address.



Did you Know?

That the brightly colored "flowers" of *Euphorbia pulcherrima* or poinsettias, a shrub native to Mexico, are not really flowers. They are modified leaves that surround a specialized flower structure called cyathum (see the botanical corner in this issue), which is unique to the Euphorbiaceae family.

Selected photos from Madagascar, a few of the 18,000+ photos taken by us on this last trip.



Adansonia rubristipa near Tulear



Verreaux's sifaka



Didiera madagascariensis



Adansonia grandidiera near Morondava



Local Malagasy



House in the highlands



Ferry crossing

All photos by Michael Douglas



COCSS Meeting notes & minutes 11-19-15:

14 members present.

4 guests not including guest speaker and her travel companion.

Started the evening with snacks and conversation while our guest speaker got set up for her presentation. Our guest presenter was Jane Carter, Extension Asst w/Oklahoma Gardening Studio Gardens at the OSU Botanical Garden in Stillwater. Ms. Carter's presentation was called "Succulent Scaping" and focused on using succulent plants in the garden, specifically considering Color, Contrast, Repetition, Texture, Form, Movement, and Emphasis. Numerous photos were shown demonstrating how color, contrast, repetition, texture, form, movement, and emphasis could be combined to create a beautiful and engaging "tapestry" in our gardens and yard. This was followed by a Q&A session.

The business meeting was called to order at 8:40pm. The previous meeting's notes were approved as presented in the November newsletter.

The Treasurer's report gave an account balance of \$8,697.06.

The COCSS Christmas Party is scheduled for December 17th (usual meeting night) at Johnny Carino's Italian Restaurant located at 7900 S. Walker Ave. (just south of I-240 & Walker); the restaurant's phone number is 632-4600. COCSS will be covering the cost of the meal, which will include appetizer, soup/salad, entree, and dessert; we will be ordering off of a pre-selected menu of approximately 8-10 entree items and desserts. Those attending are asked to arrive between 6:30 & 7pm so that we have plenty of time to order, eat, visit, and have a raffle/drawing. Please RSVP to Niki that you plan to attend and how many guests will accompany you. There will be no Dirty Santa this year; rather, plants will be provided for a raffle/drawing. If you have something you would like to include in the raffle/drawing, be sure it is wrapped and notify Niki of any raffle/drawing items you plan to bring. To RSVP, you can contact Niki by phone (722-1718) or by email (tnfurrh@cox.net). We hope everyone will attend!!!

Tony Furrh, COCSS Librarian, posed the question to those present at the meeting whether he should order books or digital versions of new cactus/succulent books being released. The question was put to a vote, and the majority voted that physical books should be ordered, as some members do not own or have access to computers. Also, Tony commented on how full the library has become and that he may have a book sale in the near future to make room for new books/periodicals. The business meeting was ended at 8:50pm, at which time the plant raffle took place.

Robert Millison

CHRISTMAS PARTY

DEC 17TH



Place: Johnny Carino's at 7900 South Walker

Time: We will begin gathering at 6:30 pm for appetizers. Will try to have dinner ordered by 7 pm.

The club will cover the expense of dinner (including guests) and we will be ordering off a pre-selected menu of approximately 8-10 items and list of desserts.

Will not be playing dirty Santa. The club will provide plants, but if you already have a gift you want to bring you may do so.

Let Niki know by December 15th if you are coming.

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SUCCULENT PLANTS by *Rosario Douglas*



The genus *Pachypodium*



Pachypodium lamerei



Pachypodium lamerei

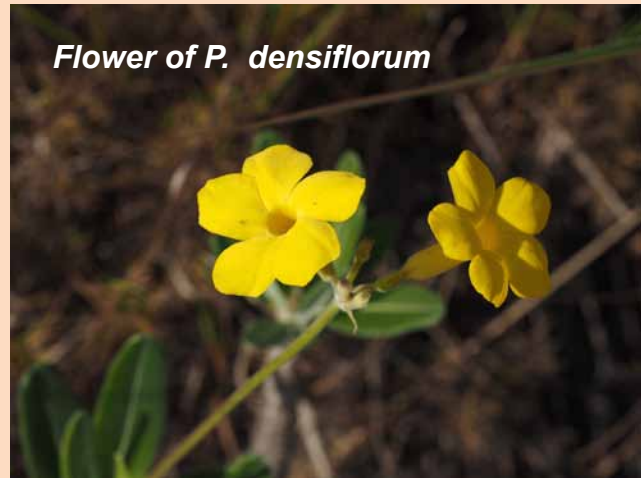
Plants in the genus *Pachypodium* belong to the Apocynaceae or Periwinkle family. The name means thick foot in Latin and it reflects the growth habit of these plants. Most species have thick trunks where water is stored.

Depending on who you read there are between 18 and 25 species, many of them found in Madagascar. (Wikipedia)



Pachypodium geayi

Except for *P. namaquanum* and *P. lealii* all *Pachypodium*s were photographed in Madagascar. With the exception of *P. lealii* photographed by Rosario Douglas all other photos in this article are by Michael Douglas.



The genus is found in continental Africa: Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Swaziland) and Madagascar. Pachypodiums live in areas with long dry periods.

Pachypodiums all share greatly enlarged stems and the presence of spines or thorns. The trunks can have a smooth appearance since the spines or thorns do not regenerate to replace old ones.



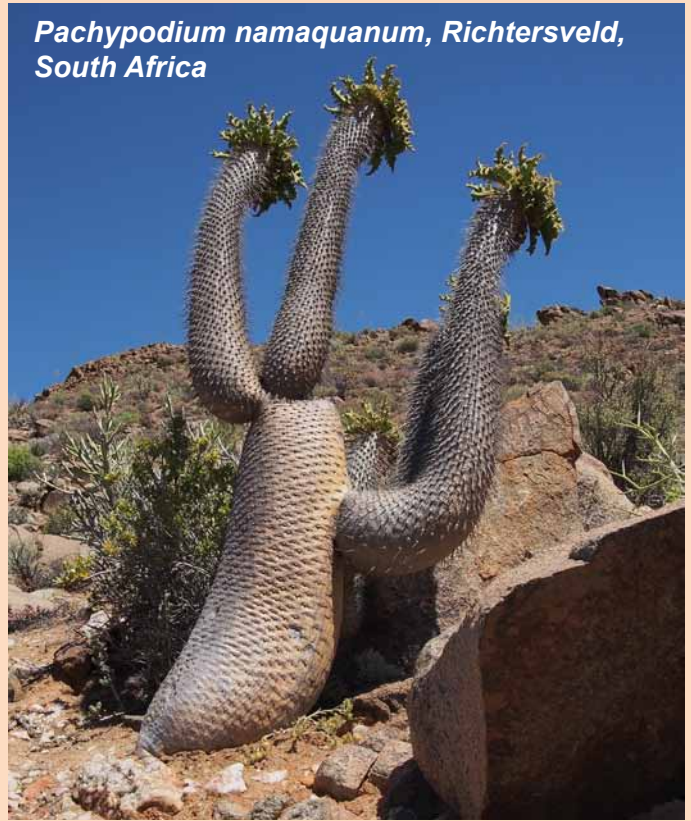
Some species of *Pachypodium* can be fairly tall (to 30 ft or more) while others like *P. brevicaule* are short and fat.

Flowers show a variety of sizes and colors. Fruits, which look like a pair of diverging horns, can contain many seeds. Plants in this genus grow in a variety of substrates including sandstone and limestone.

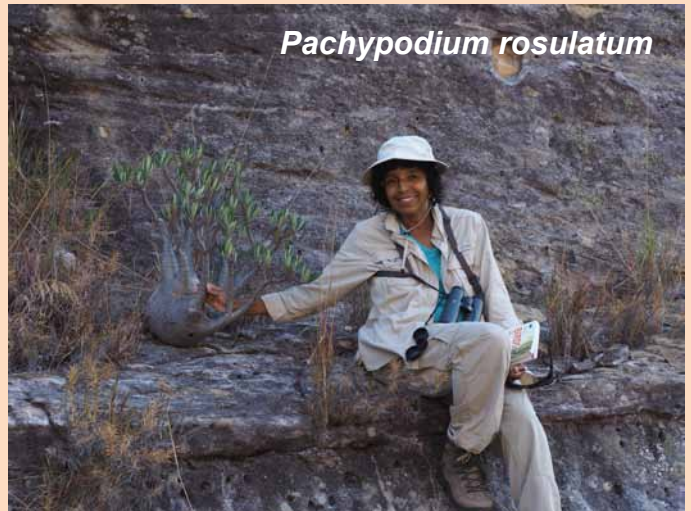
Pachypodium lealii
Namibia



***Pachypodium namaquanum*, Richtersveld,
South Africa**



Pachypodium rosulatum



Pachypodium rosulatum

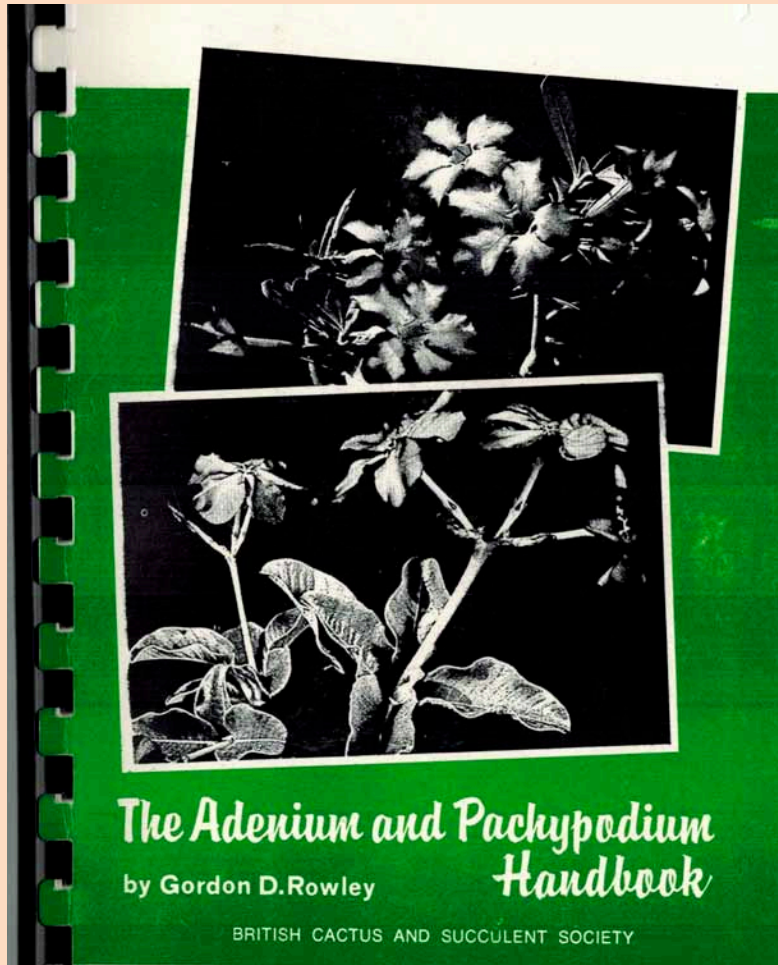
Many *Pachypodiums* are threatened in Madagascar due to habitat loss – especially due to cattle ranching and cutting dry forests for charcoal. However, many species are cultivated and available to hobbyists in many countries.

Sources: *The Adenium and Pachypodium Handbook* by Gordon D. Rowley and from *Wikipedia*.



Shown in all 4 photos is Pachypodium brevicaule

BOOK REVIEW

By *Rosario Douglas*

This compact 95 page handbook by Gordon D. Rowley, published by the British Cactus and Succulent Society, is a useful tool if you are trying to learn/identify Pachypodiums and Adeniums. Illustrations, although black and white, are of acceptable (though not great) quality.

These two genera, which appear to have shared a common ancestry long ago, are very popular with growers and hobbyists alike.

The book starts with a description of the family Apocynaceae, to which both genera belong. Two maps show the distribution of the two genera and the species. This is followed by two chapters, one about the genus Adenium and another about the genus Pachypodium.

The chapter on Adenium includes: the habit, flowers, fruits and seeds, habitats and native uses as well as history.

The chapter about the genus Pachypodium includes similar information as that for Adenium with an additional section about classification and evolution. This chapter also includes a key to the species of the genus Pachypodium. The final section covers every species of both the African and Malagasy Pachypodiums.

The book ends with a checklist of names, a section about cultivation, an epilogue and a bibliography.

THE CULTIVATION CORNER*by Rosario Douglas***Watering needs of your plants**

How much water and when do I water my cacti and other succulents? Probably all of you have been asked this short question which has no easy or short answer.

Succulents, including cacti, all share their ability to survive in dry environments and most often cacti and succulents inhabit well-drained soils. Some even grow in rock cracks where their roots can penetrate deeper and access needed water and nutrients. Dry environments, however, can come in many variations. Some succulents live in areas that are relatively cool year round e.g. coastal Chile, while others live in places like Tucson, Arizona where summer temperatures can be very high. Some succulents live in areas that receive winter rain while others live in summer rain areas.

The answer to the watering question really depends on where the plants comes from. It is useful to know in what type of soil the plants grows in their native habitat as well as the time of the year they get rain. An understanding of the average rainfall during the year is also useful. Some rock plants like *Argyrodermas* or *Conophytums* that live in the western part of South Africa receive their rain in their winter (summer in the northern hemisphere). In our greenhouse we allow these plants to go dormant during the hot time of the year and by mid- to late-October we begin to mist the plants and start watering. During the hot/dry time of the year these plants go dormant and develop a thick covering that make them appear dead.

The more you can learn about the natural habitat of your plants, including average temperatures, high and low temperatures, average rainfall and especially the time of year the plants receive rain, the better you will be able to adjust your watering and you will also have a better idea of the amount of water required. Learning something about the type of soils and the type of drainage the plants prefer in their natural habitat may also help you determine the best soil mix for your plants.

When in doubt, it is always better to underwater rather than provide too much water, but if you want your plants to grow they will need water in the right amounts and at the right time of the year. If other members of your club grow the same plants they may be able to provide you with useful information based on their experience growing the plants in question. Books also provide useful information. A good source for books on cacti and succulents is Rainbow Gardens Bookshop at: <http://rainbowgardensbookshop.org>. Finally if your club has a lending library that would be your first place to get useful books about cacti and succulents.

Below are some interesting links that discuss this topic in more detail.

<http://succulent-plant.com/cultivation.html>

<http://www.new-mexico.cactus-society.org/pdocs/SucculentDishGardens--8-10.pdf>

<http://www.cactusinfo.net/watering.htm>

THE BOTANICAL CORNER

by Rosario Douglas



Crucigerus Cross-bearing, usually referring to the spine formation.

Cultivar Assemblage of plants originated or selected artificially.

Cuticle Protective waxy coverings produced by the epidermal cells of leaves, young shoots and other aerial plant organs. The cuticle minimizes water loss and reduces pathogen entry due to their waxy secretion.

Cutting A portion of a plant cut off and used for propagation.

Curvispinus With curved spines.

Cyathium The cyathium (plural cyathia) is a flower structure unique to members of the Euphorbia family. The cyathium consists of greatly reduced male and a female flowers (unlike “normal” flowers, petals and sepals are absent). These reduced flowers are housed in a cup-shaped involucre or fused bracts. Nectar glands and petal-like appendages to the nectar glands are a common feature that surrounds the cup-shaped cyathium.

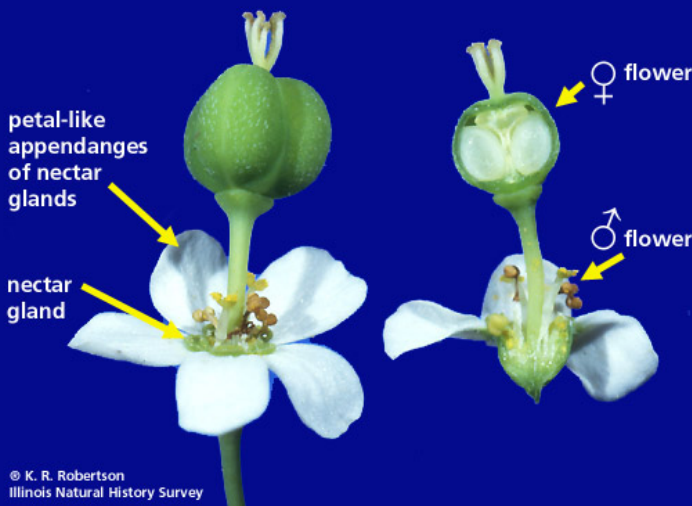
Two interesting articles at:

http://www.euphorbiaceae.org/pages/about_euphorbia.html and

<http://waynesword.palomar.edu/trmar98b.htm>

illustrates the concept of cyathium.

Cyathium of *Euphorbia corollata*



Terms from a book by W. Taylor Marshall and R.S. Woods. The book is titled, **Glossary of succulent plant terms**, published in 1938., Wikipedia. Also terms from CactiGuide.com at <http://cactiguide.com/glossary/>.