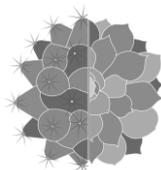


British Cactus & Succulent Society

Southampton & District Branch Newsletter

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Editorial

It's been a rather wet December but temperatures continue to be mild with only a handful of sub-zero nights so far. Of course all this could change in an instant and in the last couple of years we have had freakish cold weather well into spring. Still, it's encouraging to think that the days are beginning to get longer and that it may be time to give plants their first watering in perhaps 10 or 12 weeks' time.

Announcements

The **branch programme for 2020** has been prepared and printed copies are available from the front table. If you have given your email address to David Neville, then he will have emailed you a PDF copy of this. The **branch website** has also been updated with the 2020 programme and there's also a link to check the meetings at the other Zone 11 branches, namely Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

Don't forget to **renew** your **BCSS membership** – this can be done using the form included with the CactusWorld Journals which were sent out to members in December. You can also renew using Paypal or a credit card at the BCSS website, at: <http://society.bcsc.org.uk/index.php/subscriptions.html> (when renewing online you'll need to know your BCSS membership number, this is written on the address label of your Journal – David and I also have a list of membership numbers for current members)

Today's meeting will consist of **short talks by branch members**. It usually turns out to be one of the more interesting meetings we put on each year.

Last Month's Meeting

2019 AGM

Our last meeting of 2019 was the Annual General Meeting, followed by our Christmas American Supper. Richard White commenced proceedings and mentioned that we had received apologies for absence from several members, including chairman Adrian Bailey whose eyesight had been affected by some medication – Adrian's absence meant that Richard White – our vice-chairman - would direct the meeting.

We normally invite the key members of the committee to make a statement to the assembled members, and written reports are also included in the December newsletter.

David asked Peter Down (our president) if he had anything to say, and Peter said he didn't – he would just be repeating the same things that he has said for the last 20 years - but he thanked everyone at the branch.

Adrian's report was in the newsletter and he had commented on how it had been another successful year for the branch. He had also mentioned Geoff Card sadly passing away in the middle of last year. Adrian had also mentioned that we had celebrated the branch's 65th anniversary at the May meeting, with a lavish cake which had been prepared by Jane Williams' daughter.

David said his report was also in the newsletter. There wasn't much he wanted to add to what he had written. He mentioned we had good attendances and new faces show up at almost every meeting during the year, but some people only show up once and we don't see them again – others of course have become regular attendees. It was just a slight worry to him as to why we don't see some of them again. Did they not like the atmosphere at the meeting or were they not made to feel welcome? Perhaps the talk during the meeting they attended may have not been to their liking. He stressed that it was important for everyone at the branch to welcome new members. The program for 2020 had been handed out at the AGM and David said he would

also email it to everyone whose email address he had. Turning to the programme of events for next year, there were one or two new speakers – David mentioned that the number of available BCSS speakers is reducing each year, and many of them can't travel a long distance mid-week, which is when we hold our meetings. Martin Edwards was a speaker from Harrow and he had not been to us before. Mark Preston has stopped giving talks and had given us a talk on Epiphytic cacti previously – he had agreed to visit us once more next year. Paul Klaassen and Stuart Riley will also be speaking to us next year.

David said he had also included the Portsmouth summer and autumn shows in our programme – these events represent the best chance to see a cactus and succulent show in our region. In July, the BCSS will be holding the National Show and this will be in Milton Keynes this time. It's not an event to be missed if you have not been to one before – it's a chance to see some of the best plants in the whole country. David mentioned he had wanted to stand down as Branch Secretary, but no one has come forward as a replacement, so he will continue in the role, but there will be some meetings during 2020 that he would not be present at. Also, there are jobs he had inherited from the time David and Margaret Corina were secretary and some of these could really be done by others at the branch so he will try and get others to help with these. Members don't need to be on the committee to help with tasks and people such as Peter Bircher help with the raffle, and Ben Turner helped with the administration of the New Forest show and will do the same in 2020, as well as help with the Romsey show. David mentioned that Portsmouth have split the role of secretary into 3 – they have a general secretary, a minutes secretary and a membership secretary.

Alice gave a quick summary of the branch finances. It had been a really good year for us - last year we made a small loss of £44 but this year we had managed to make a profit of £301. This improvement was largely due to the New Forest Show - despite higher costs, we sold many more plants and we also received some prize money at the event. The Romsey Show also went very well. In addition to these events, we had higher attendances at meetings and this meant we collected some extra funds at those meetings. We have over £8000 in our reserves, although this figure includes some Zone 11 funds that we are holding temporarily. A vote was taken and the accounts were adopted.

Richard mentioned the other committee member reports were in the newsletter. Did anyone else on the committee want to say anything? Glenn Finn

mentioned that he would like to thank Ted Smith and Ivor Biddlecombe for doing additional work as his "catering assistants".

Next it was time to elect the committee for 2020. No one new had stepped forward saying they would like to perform any of the committee tasks, and the old committee were willing to stand and perform the same duties again, so a vote was taken to re-elect the committee en-masse. This motion was approved.

Colin and Lorraine Bielckus were present at the AGM, and we asked them if they were prepared to act as our auditors for 2019-2020 and do our accounts again next year. They accepted – and were given a bottle of wine from the branch, as thanks for preparing the accounts for 2019.

Next it was time to hand out trophies to the table show winners. Ironically, despite high attendances at our monthly meeting, support for the table show is lower than it's been. For some months, only 2 people entered any plants. We will make an effort to badger people into entering more plants, and if there is no improvement, we may have to consider ending the table show and perhaps replacing it with some sort of extended "plants of interest". Is there any reason why people don't bring their plants? It might be awkward for some people to bring plants in, especially if they are working, but surely that doesn't apply to everybody.

The other thing David wanted to mention is that at the national level they have determined that the talks given at many branch meetings are too long. Currently we ask speakers to talk for 85-90 minutes and it's been suggested that this should be cut back, to perhaps 60 minutes, and we should fill the rest of the meeting with other things that will encourage more interaction and discussion between the members. We need some volunteers that will commit to doing something at the start of each monthly meeting and a person who is prepared to organise this to make sure it happens at 8-10 meetings in the year. And we should always have some sort of discussion about the table show plants. Ivor mentioned that sometimes the speakers don't know the plants too well and may not be willing to talk about the plants on the table – however, we just need someone to talk about some of the plants - either the speaker - or perhaps the person who brought the plant in. David will try and come up with a rota. He asked if anyone thought the current format of the meeting is already perfect – or are they open to some changes? We will end up taking 10-15 minutes off the speakers and adding a few minutes from a couple of extra things. It's difficult to please everyone. Michelle asked whether the time we allow

for the mid-meeting break for refreshments and the raffle – which is currently 30 minutes – could be cut down? This seems unlikely since we have 30-40 people to serve, and indeed it's one of the opportunities for people to look at the table show and sales plants and chat with each other - but we will try and make sure it doesn't exceed 30 minutes.

The trophies for the table show were handed out. For the "Open Cacti" class, Bruce Beckerleg was the winner and was awarded the 50th anniversary glass trophy for cacti. For "Open Succulents" the winner was Ivor Biddlecombe, and he received the 50th anniversary trophy for succulents. For "Intermediate Cacti", Bruce was the winner and received the Peter Down 50th Golden Jubilee Trophy for cacti. For "Intermediate Succulents", Ivor won the 25th Anniversary Paperweight for succulents. The winner of the "Plant in Flower" class was Bruce and he received the Solent Cup. Finally, the Ladies Cup was awarded to the lady member gaining the most points overall, and this was won by Miranda Stevenson.

We briefly discussed the January meeting, where members were invited to bring along some pictures or slides that they wanted to talk about for a few minutes. We had some volunteers already, but needed a couple more people to fill out the evening.

Following this – the AGM was officially over and people were invited to help themselves to the food and drink that had been laid out on the side tables.

Vinay Shah

Photography Competition

Tom Radford has agreed to oversee a "Photography" competition within the branch, based upon a format mentioned recently in the Journal (see Journal Vol 37 No 3 - September 2019).

The competition will be judged on photography - and not rarity or the age of the plants.

There are two classes - one for Cacti and one for Succulents. Members can submit up to three entries in each class. Entries should be in JPG format and should include the entrant's name and title for the image, together with an entry form. (a PDF of the entry form will be put up on our branch website within a week.)

Entries should be taken in the current calendar year and must be submitted by the closing date of 3rd November 2020, which coincides with our November meeting. Entries should be submitted on an SD card or emailed directly to Tom at tom.radford@hotmail.co.uk

The results to be announced at the January 2021 meeting.

The plants will be judged on:

- Impact
- Composition
- Background
- Exposure
- Lighting
- Depth of Field.

Images will be marked out of 10 with points deducted for faults in these categories.

Judging will be organised by Tom Radford, assisted by a member of Viewfinders of Romsey Camera Club.

Tom Radford

Next Month's Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on February 4th and will feature a talk by Paul Klaassen titled "What I Did Last Winter". Paul travels regularly to cactus and succulent habitats and I expect this talk will cover a trip which he made to Chile last November. Paul has visited Chile on numerous occasions and no doubt he'll be able to tell us if the plant habitats are being preserved or are in danger from human development.

The February Table Show will consist of the **Echinopsis** group (cacti) and the **Crassulaceae** 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 10th Edition* (contact me if you don't have a copy of this).

The *Echinopsis* group includes *Acanthocalycium*, *Chamaecereus*, *Denmoza*, *Echinopsis*, *Helianthocereus*, *Hymenorebutia*, *Leucostele*, *Lobivia*, *Pseudolobivia*, *Pygmaecereus*, *Soehrensia* and *Trichocereus*.

The Crassulaceae group contains subgroups for *Adromischus*, *Aeonium*, *Crassula*, *Echeveria*, *Sedum* and *Sempervivum*. These subgroups cover many species, including *Adromischus*, *Bryophyllum*, *Cotyledon*, *Kalanchoe*, *Tylecodon*, *Aeonium*, *Greenovia*, *Monanthes*, *Crassula*, *Rochea*, *Dudleya*, *Echeveria*, *Graptopetalum*, *Pachyphytum*, *Tacitus*, *Sedum*, *Jovibarba*, *Orostachys*, *Rosularia*, and *Sempervivum*.

Forthcoming Events

Sat 11 th	Jan	Isle of Wight	no meeting
Sat 18 th	Jan	Portsmouth	Ramble through the collection + Greenhouse automation – Julian Cook
Tue 4 th	Feb	Southampton	What I Did Last Winter – Paul Klaassen
Sat 8 th	Feb	Isle of Wight	Highlights of Arizona & Utah – David Neville
Sat 15 th	Feb	Portsmouth	New Season Cultivation/Propagation Workshop
Tue 3 rd	Mar	Southampton	A Trip to North-West Argentina - Hazel Taylor
Sat 14 th	Mar	Isle of Wight	Northern Peru Nov 2017 - Cliff Thompson
Sat 21 st	Mar	Portsmouth	My world of Mammallarias - Tony Roberts

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

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