



Desert Breeze

Newsletter of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society

April 2024

Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society • In Person and Zoom Program Presentation • Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 7:00pm

Sky Islands Public High School, 6000 East 14th Street, Tucson, Arizona 85711

Arizona hedgehog cactus (Echinocereus arizonicus subsp. arizonicus) restoration in Central Arizona

Presented by Raul Puente Martinez and Lane Butler

The Arizona hedgehog cactus *Echinocereus arizonicus* subsp. *arizonicus* is a member of the cactus family native to central Arizona, and is a robust, cespitose species forming clumps of 5 to 80 (-118) stems, the stems 8-10 cm in diameter. Because of its red flowers it is a very attractive cactus, and it was removed from the wild via poaching during the decades of 70's to 90's. As a subspecies of *Echinocereus arizonicus*, the Arizona hedgehog cactus or AHC is native to central Arizona and is known from an approximately 170 sq km between the town of Superior and Miami in Gila and Pinal counties. It's found in in greatest density within chaparral and Oak forest with a couple of disjunct subpopulations in pine forest. The elevation range is 4000 to 5700 feet, so it does tolerate snow. Most of the range is within the Tonto National Forest but it occurs also private property and BLM land. AHC habitat is very rugged, so surveys for the species are incomplete. It does not appear to occupy its entire suitable habitat, so its distribution is patchy. Thus, the known population estimate based on GPS points with proper metadata, is between 6000 and 7000 individuals, but this was prior to the Telegraph and Carlota Fires. In our presentation, we will discuss two restoration efforts of the AHC that the authors have been involved with the goal of augmenting the population of this endangered species, and show the impact of the wildfires in the area of natural distribution. This project received support from the TCSS in 2022.

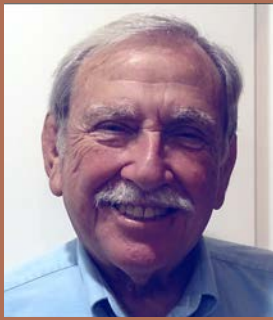
Raul Puente Martinez has worked at the Desert Botanical Garden (DBG) as Curator of Living Collections and Research Botanist since 2001. He is responsible for curatorial duties such as plant acquisition, database maintenance and mapping of the garden's Living Collection. Since 2006, he has been involved with the Cactus and Succulent Specialist Group of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature as the Red List Authority Coordinator. In this capacity, he has been involved in writing Risk of Extinction assessments for numerous species of Cactaceae as well as Agave and Yucca. His education includes a degree in Agronomy with a major in Botany from the Universidad Autónoma of San Luis Potosí, México. He obtained his Master of Science degree from Arizona State University (ASU). His research interests include systematics of the genus *Opuntia* (prickly pears) as well as the use of low water plants in landscapes. His work at the DBG has allowed him to visit deserts of the world in search of plants with low water requirements for the Living Collection, as well as to test their potential for introduction into xeric landscapes.

Lane Butler has worked at DBG as Tonto National Forest Rare Plant Community Science Project coordinator and

rare plant researcher since 2019. She is responsible for grant-writing for her various projects, which include opportunities to train community scientists to survey for rare plants in the Tonto National Forest as well as opportunities to work on rare plant conservation and restoration. Since 2021, she has been involved with conservation and restoration work with *Echinocereus arizonicus* ssp. *arizonicus*, the federally listed endangered Arizona hedgehog cactus. Her education includes an interdisciplinary Bachelor of Science at ASU, which allowed her to focus on plant biology, conservation biology and ecological restoration, and a Master of Science in Plant Conservation Biology at ASU. Her research interests include plant-pollinator interactions and conservation in the Sonoran Desert and rare plant conservation in the Tonto National Forest. She has authored and co-authored several articles and papers about the rare plants she has researched. Her work at the DBG has allowed her to engage in significant fieldwork in the Tonto National Forest and to engage with plant enthusiasts seeking to become Community scientists for the sake of rare plants.

We are always thinking of your safety and if you are not feeling well we ask that you join us on the internet Zoom presentation. If you're doing well and would like to attend, you are welcome to come and join us for this special in person presentation (masks will be encouraged but not required). This meeting will also be a Zoom program and will be an important educational and informational event you must see. Also, if using Zoom, be sure to log in to win a \$25.00 gift certificate from TCSS or choose a copy of the new 3rd edition of the Field Guide to Cacti & Other Succulents of Arizona. Excellent plant give aways will take place at the in person meeting but that portion of the program, because of the recording, will not appear on Zoom. When leaving the live in person meeting, please enjoy great refreshments provided by our member volunteers and also, everyone can get a special free plant offered to you by the TCSS.





President's Message

The Earth Day sale is fast approaching on April 20, 2024. Thursday, May 16 is the Grand Opening Celebration of the Labyrinth at Pima Prickly Park. I mention these two events as some of the reasons why we need a highly motivated public relations chairperson and a team of volunteers to assist that chair. We

have so many event and activities that we want the public to know about and participate in. We haven't made this a priority for a number of years but we really need to get serious about it. I know there must be someone in the 1,700 plus member base that would like to lead this effort. Please contact me if you are willing to use your experience in this area to support our society.

The Earth Day sale will be under the big tent at our Amphitheater site (4th and Wetmore). We will be open between 8:00 am and 2:00 pm. There is no waiting to participate in the Vendor Sales. A list of all the vendors will be available online shortly. There will be plants, pottery, crafts etc. available for purchase from member vendors. Please support them since they are the backbone of the hobby. There will also be rescue and society propagated plants. There will not be Saguaro available over 5ft.

In the future, the rescuing, moving and sale of larger Saguaro will be allocated to businesses that have the appropriate equipment for safely handling these specimens. We have a final inventory of larger Saguaro that we will be selling online. You will get an email regarding the process in the next week or so. You can contact sales@tucsoncactus.org for more information.

Do you want to grow your own Saguaro from seed? We will be at the Earth Day sale to get you started with everything necessary to grow Saguaro. It is fun, simple and rewarding. Remember what I always say: "I want my grandchildren's grandchildren to enjoy the beauty and flowering of a Saguaro." We need to start now to insure that this will happen.

Please stop by Pima Prickly Park. It's blooming! We also need volunteers as the weather warms up to help with watering and maintaining our collection of plants. It is a lot of fun and rewarding.

Thank you for your continued support.

Dick Wiedhopf, President

Instructions To Join The TCSS Zoom Meeting on April 4, 2024

If you have a laptop or other device where you can enter a web site address enter <https://bit.ly/tcssmm>

Copy this into your browser address line or just click on it. If this does not work and for all other types of devices see our Zoom Meeting Instructions page on our web site. It is

https://tcss.wildapricot.org/resources/pdf_files/ZoomInstructions.pdf

You can also find a link to it by going to our August Meeting notice information on the web.

Sales Volunteer



Hello TCSS,

I have only lived in Tucson for a few months and I am new to gardening in the desert. Growing up, my father had a huge garden in which all of us kids were responsible for planting, weeding, watering and harvesting. Although we complained bitterly of our garden chores, we all eventually learned to love gardening.

I recently moved here from Portland, Oregon where we had a garden that took up our whole back yard with vegetables, berries, and fruit trees. Our suburban front yard we elaborately designed and maintained.

Now living in Tucson, we want to create a rich welcoming habitat for all creatures. At first, desert gardening seemed daunting, so to learn about cactus and desert plants we decided to join TCSS.

My husband and I thoroughly enjoy going out on rescues in nature. So many members are very generous sharing with us their knowledge and experiences. I especially enjoy participating in the plant sales because it is fast paced and very social. I look forward to participating in more TCSS activities and meeting more members.

Suzette Ehrlic

SAVE THE DATE

April 20, 2024 – Earth Day Sale

This will be a combination Vendor/Rescue plant Sale
Open to the public
Check your email for more information

PAUL & JORDAN
“Starting Anew in Blenman-Elm”
April 13, 2024 from 8am to 12pm

We moved into this 1948 home in 2020. The landscape was mostly non-native plants including a large oleander hedge. The backyard was completely paved with layers of bricks and concrete which we removed with the help of machines and dump trucks. Yards and yards of old irrigation pipes also had to be removed.



We decided early on to only plant Sonoran Desert plants because we wanted to create a habitat that would be welcoming to the local fauna. It's great that Tucson has such excellent resources such as Desert Survivors Native Plant Nursery, Tucson Audubon Society, the Watershed Management Group and the inspiring and valuable book “Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond”. Together with the TCSS rescue sales, we've found all the support we have needed to create our Sonoran Desert habitat.

This May the garden will be starting its third year. Most of the plants planted early on have become established. We are continually adding more plants and sowing seed. Most of the plantings are watered by hand or an oscillating sprinkler. It takes a while, but we expect to be able to water less this year as plants grow deeper roots and become established. The garden may need occasional supplemental watering if I notice things having a hard time during extended dry periods, but we're hopeful that what we've planted can survive on annual rainfall.



Almost all of the TCSS rescued plants have done well. We now have 6 fairly young saguaros. Hopefully future owners will appreciate them and they will grow arms and live to an old age. We had little success with wildflower seeds the first two springs, possibly due to the use of germination inhibiting herbicides by previous owners, but this year more seeds are germinating and will hopefully continue to multiply.

We still have lots of work to do. The garden is a work in progress. The area around the pool is still as we found it in 2020, but we will be redoing that next. We are thinking maybe less pool and more desert plants, of course. Stay tuned.

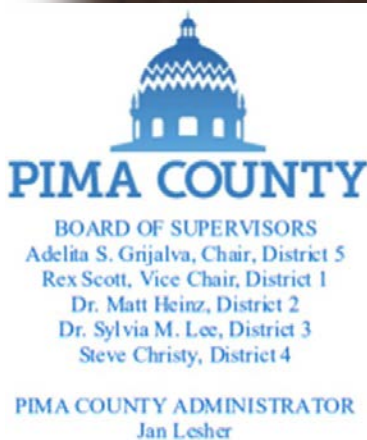


FROM THIS TO THIS

The Labyrinth at Pima Prickly Park
Grand Opening Celebration
Thursday, May 16, 2024 ~ 9:00 a.m.
3500 W. River Road

*Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society
in Partnership with the
Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation*

*Cordially Invite You to Attend
the Grand Opening Celebration of
“A Place for Reflection:
The Labyrinth at Pima Prickly Park”*



Please wear comfortable shoes suitable for walking on gravel.



Spring Growth—Waterman Restoration Area Tour #1 Friday and Saturday April 12 & 13, 8:00 am

Waterman Restoration Area, Ironwood Forest NM
with John Scheuring and Andrew Gourevitch.



Stroll through this impressive desert restoration site on a limestone foothill slope snuggled at the base of the Waterman Mountains. Fourteen years after getting a monoculture of buffelgrass under control and installing passive water harvesting, we will see many of the 115 native species growing on the 18 acres, with focus on the keystone species that serve

to restore and maintain the desert. We will walk slowly about ½ mile over uneven ground. Turn off I-10 onto Avra Valley Rd (Exit 242), turn west and drive 19 miles straight ahead. Turn left at the large HOLCIM sign on your left and drive one mile, bearing left.

For more information or to register,
email tucsonaznpstrips@gmail.com

Acknowledgement Of Contributions

The Names Below Represent The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society Members
And Friends Whose Donations Helped Make This Year A Success.
We Extend Our Sincere Thanks For Your Support.

Marvie & Jo Kaiser
Catherine & Kelly Slawson
Alexandra Mitchell & Kyle Wilcox
Timothy Cusick
Mindy S Aronoff
Jan Emming
Ross Horwitz & Julia Keller
Marshall Humphrey & Janice Brundage
Jean & Tim Mcdaniel
Peter Packard
William Peachey
Dara Sitter & Family

Cynthia Morgan
Peter Askew
Carol & Roger Collier
Patrick & Patty Jones
Carl Englander & Paula Borchardt
Nicki Clarke
Jeanie & Dick Honn
Green Valley Fire Department, Chief Joey Kosiorowski
Jane and Francois Robert
Paul McDermott
Judy Schumacher
Jen Foy

Saguaros Like You Have Never Seen Them Tour #2

Saturday April 20, 8-11 am

West Avra Valley Road, 35-mile car loop with John Scheuring.
Fifteen-person limit.



We will carpool west on Avra Valley Rd 20 miles with four stops for an eye opening learning tour about saguaros and their associated native plants. This will include a half mile slow hike through desert filled with saguaros like you have never seen them: multi-armed saguaros of all types and stages of development, a saguaro singularly preferred by flickers, a lightning struck saguaro, multiple saguaro families around and under nurse trees, and telltale early signs of saguaro decline. Finally we will drive west to an area where we will discuss the natural history of saguaro pollination and genetic relatedness between neighboring saguaros. Even saguaro experts will have

something new to learn and think about! Many desert annual species will be in full bloom. Meet on the East side of the Marana Airport parking lot. The Marana airport is exactly 5 miles west of I-10 on Avra Valley road on the north side of the road. Note: ALL participants MUST be willing to carpool so we can limit the number of cars parked along the roadsides. Regular sedans and SUVs are welcome.

For more information or to register,
email tucsonaznpstrips@gmail.com

Urban rescue cactus *Cleistocactus strausii* in flower at Pima Prickly Park.



Photo credit: Julie Shulick



March Madness Sale

Our March Madness Sale was a success thanks to all that attended. We sold 18 agaves, 50 barrels, 6 hedgehogs, 40 flats and 31 boxes of mams, 158 ocotillo, 15 saguaros, and 157 Hoop House plants. This was all possible thanks to the 30 volunteers that helped as shoppers, loaders, and cashiers. Hope to see everyone at The Earth Day Sale on April 20th.

Crystal Cannon – TSCC Sales Coordinator

TCSS – 2024 SARSEF Winners

Each year, TCSS K-12 Education Outreach judges science projects related to cactus and succulents. This year, we selected five high school and three elementary school award winners. In addition to a certificate and monetary award, each student received a family membership to TCSS. Congratulations to our 2024 winners and special thanks to our judges, Edie Campbell, Patsy Frannea and Janine Malkin.

First Prize

Cailinn Allen

Photosynthetic Differences Between Saguaros in Natural and Urban Environments

Second Prize

Jeanne Wages Class Project

Saguaro Genome Mining for Plant Defense

Third Prize

Ella Walsh

A Prickly Project

Honorable Mention Awards

Aidan Higuera

The Effects of Man-made Climate Change on the Population Density of the Saguaro Cactus

Angela Chen and Mary Elda Olmsted

An Onslaught of Spines

Lorenzo Sanchez (Third Grade)

Cactus Man

Bill Gallo (Fifth Grade)

Hungry Javelina

Eli Theiss (Sixth Grade)

Cactus Roots

TCSS -K-12 Education Outreach

March began with our team judging SARSEF science fair projects and hosting a booth at their awards and expo event at Reid Park. We also spoke at the Mesquite Garden Club and provided activities for STEM nights at Copper Creek Elementary, Esmond Station Elementary, Leman Academy of Excellence and Red Rock Elementary.

In April, our team is scheduled at St. Mark's Early Childhood Center, Donaldson Elementary and Fort Lowell's Family Fun Day. Thanks to our volunteers for your outstanding work!



TCSS BOARD

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Technology: technology@Tucsoncactus.org

Research: Doug Rowsell • research@Tucsoncactus.org

Field Trips/tours: Open

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Plant Sales: Crystal Cannon • sales@tucsoncactus.org

Field Guide Sales: Susan Durham & John Durham

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Conservation: Thomas Staudt

conservation@tucsoncactus.org

Newsletter Editor: Karen Keller • newsletter@tucsoncactus.org

Deadline for newsletter text or photos:

Thursday, April 25 by 4:00pm

TCSS Web Page:

www.tucsoncactus.org

Webmaster: Barb Watts • webmaster@Tucsoncactus.org

For general information and questions related to

TCSS, email TCSS@TucsonCactus.org

or call (520) 256-2447 during business hours.

Everyone is Welcome!

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

137,599

Cacti Rescued - Since 1999

706 Rescues - 52,271 Volunteer Hours (updated 01-09-24)

Please see our under Activities 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.

April, 2024

Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 7:00pm

Arizona hedgehog cactus (*Echinocereus arizonicus* subsp. *arizonicus*) restoration in Central Arizona

presented by Raul Puente Martinez and Lane Butler

Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 7:00pm in Person

Ward 3 Council Office

1510 E Grant Rd (Grant and Vine)

TCSS Program Presentation

May 2, 2024 at 7:00pm

Knowing and cultivating Haworthias

presented by Dr. Robert "Bob" Webb

TCSS Meeting Refreshments

Please share and socialize with your fellow members at our monthly meetings by bringing some type of finger food for the refreshment table. For the **April MEETING** we are asking members whose last names begin with "**A**" through "**J**" to bring something that would serve 10-12 people.



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