



DESERT BREEZE

NEWSLETTER OF THE TUCSON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM

INTIMACY, EXPLORATION, AND WONDER...CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF PLANT PHOTOGRAPHY

PRESENTED BY: IRWIN LIGHTSTONE

On the evening of my return from a photography workshop, I affixed the base plate of a greenhouse wall to the slab foundation. Drilling into the concrete to attach the anchor bolts, I knew was building a home for my two hobbies: raising succulents and plant photography. After 30 or so years, that marriage has grown, flourished, and enriched my life. See how photography can deepen your growing experience.

Everyone is welcome to come and join us for this special in person presentation. This meeting will also be a Zoom program and will be an important educational and informational event you must see. 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.



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 **SEPTEMBER MEETING** we are asking members whose last names begin with **"O" through "Z"** to bring something that would serve 10-12 people.

INTERESTED IN THIS PROGRAM?

For more information on attending this program (in person or through zoom) please refer to pages 23-24.

MEET THE PRESENTER

MEET IRWIN – PHOTOGRAPHER, ARTIST & VISIONARY

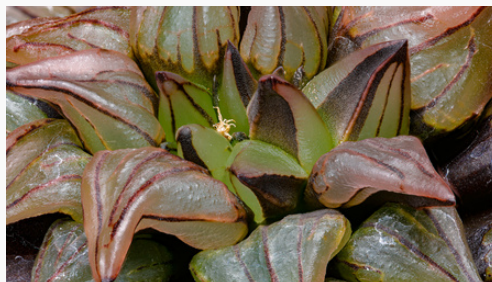


Pursuing his passion over his profession, Irwin closed his law practice of 29 years to become a full-time photographer. From 2010 through 2013, he was a staff photographer, then head of the photography department of the Wilson History and Research Center in Little Rock Arkansas. Since that time, he has pursued his artistic vision. Specializing in highly detailed, artistic images of cacti and succulents, Irwin's images are widely published and collected. Publications that featured his work include the Cactus and Succulent Journal, Hasseltonia, Sansevieria, To The Point, CactusWorld, several National Geographic publications and the new Dudleya book. In addition to private workshops and numerous programs for plant societies and photography clubs throughout the country, he's led workshops and programs sponsored by the Dallas

Museum of Art, the International Photography Hall of Fame, The Huntington, the North America Association of Nature Photography, and the CSSA. Irwin is formerly the President of the North Texas Cactus and Succulent Society. He is Vice President, a member of the Board of Directors, and Co-Chairs the Conservation Committee of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America.

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	pg. 3
Urban Rescue	pg. 4-6
Octotillo Article	pg. 7
K-12 Education	pg. 8
Garden Tours	pg. 9
Silent Auction	pg. 10-11
Yellow Spine Article	pg. 12-13
Directory	pg. 14
Contacts	pg. 15
Donors	pg. 16
Calendar	pg. 17
Meeting Location	pg. 18



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another year is quickly coming to an end. We have some exciting upcoming events that include: The Good Time Silent Auction, Fall Home Tours, **TCCS 65th Birthday Party, November 9**, the **Annual Meeting** and **Holiday Party on December 6** and there will also be some pop-up plant sales. A new membership process has been developed and will be introduced this year. This will be a fun and busy end to another great year.



We are in the final process for our new space at Nan Lyons Elementary School. This new space will be used for the library and reading room, committee meetings, Board meetings, propagation activities and growing and potting areas to meet the needs of new programs. This is only the beginning of the potential uses. We are looking forward to a grand opening soon.

The Good Time Silent Auction is September 21. See the article in this newsletter for the details. This is a fun opportunity to acquire new plants and also a great opportunity to share your excess plants with others. Get rid of those old garden items so you can acquire someone else's old garden items. We do require that plants are free of disease and other items are in repair and working conditions. Of course, the best part is Ice Cream and all the toppings.

We also have elections coming up. This year there are 4 Board of Director seats (3 year terms) that will be elected in December. Every member will receive an application form to run for office. I hope that many of you will respond so that the nominations committee will have a lot of interested and qualified members for the ballot. Elections and results are part of the Annual Meeting and Holiday Party activities.

The Home Tour committee is scheduling tours in October. More information will be available soon. These are wonderful opportunities to see how other members have utilized their cactus and succulent collections. There are always new things to learn and incorporate in your own landscaping and growing/collecting activities.

November 9, we will celebrate the 65th birthday of our society with activities at Pima Prickly Park. Certainly, there will be cake and Ice Cream. This will be an opportunity to celebrate the continued growth of the park and see the new Pincushion Garden, expanded *Ferocactus* garden and new Prickly Pear garden. Of course this will be a wonderful time to walk our outstanding Labyrinth.

We will cap off the year with the **Annual Meeting/Holiday Party on Saturday, December 6**. Election results, president's awards, great food, a gift exchange and enjoying the end of another great year with other members are all part of this activity. **This year we will be at the St Phillips facility.**

I hope you will enjoy this fall season. The 100 degree plus temperatures will end and soon we will be wishing their return since who likes to be cold?

Thank you for your support.

Dick Wiedhopf, President

Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society, Inc.

URBAN RESCUE REPORT

We had a lull in rescues for a short time but now it's picked up. One particular rescue ended up that we had to leave the cactus on the property. Here's the story:



This beautiful, large, 19-headed Golden Barrel was being rescued because it was impeding the ability for the homeowner to drive her horse trailer on the driveway and she was afraid the cactus might get damaged. Chris is showing the width.



Francisco and Nadia cleared around it, trimmed back the plants, and started digging it out.



That's when we discovered it had a hole that was the doorway to a packrat home. The packrats had been enjoying the nice cool environment inside the cactus and eating to their hearts' content. We started to question whether this was going to be able to be sold at the Blooming Barrel sale.

URBAN RESCUE REPORT



Since the cactus needed to be moved either way, we continued digging it out. That's when a small rattlesnake came out of the cactus. It wasn't too happy with our presence so he went right back inside it. That's the moment we decided this was definitely not a good candidate for the Blooming Barrel Sale.



So it made sense to move the cactus further from the house and plant it out of the way so the creatures could still enjoy their home.



The truck got it close to the final location and the team, Ray, Joel, Randy, Tim, Nadia, and Chris dragged it off the roadway. It was heavy but the soil was nice and sandy. And yes, at this point there is at least one packrat and snake still inside.

URBAN RESCUE REPORT



The cactus and its inhabitants can now enjoy living in a better location. Not sure if this roommate situation is going to last too long.



BTW, Urban Rescue does not typically move plants for homeowners. This was a very special case and the team all felt it was the right thing to do.



“Tasha took photos from a safe distance”. We don’t see her in any of the photos but instead of digging, she took photos after the snake was discovered.



WE’RE ALWAYS HAPPY TO HAVE VOLUNTEERS JOIN OUR TEAM. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME IF YOU ARE INTERESTED OR HAVE QUESTIONS.



INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

BY: STEVE WATTS

Have you been puzzled by the behavior of our iconic ocotillos this early summer? If you've been driving around Tucson, you may have noticed something unusual. The landscape is dotted with ocotillos, verdant and lush with leaves, yet strangely lacking their signature fiery red flowers. Many of us at the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society have wondered the same thing: why are our beloved ocotillos skipping their bloom this season, despite a seemingly perfect extended period of lush foliage? It's a great question that gets to the heart of how these fascinating desert plants thrive. Ocotillos (scientific name: *Fouquieria splendens*) are masters of adaptation, and their recent behavior is a perfect example of their strategic survival in the Sonoran Desert. The key to understanding this phenomenon lies in the distinction between leafing and flowering. Ocotillos are "drought-deciduous," meaning they rapidly drop their leaves to conserve water during dry spells and sprout new ones with every significant rainfall. This happened right on cue this year. A surprising rain on June 1st—followed by more showers in early and mid-July—triggered a flush of green across our ocotillo population. They've remained in full leaf for over 60 days, busily photosynthesizing and looking healthier than ever.

However, leaf production is a different physiological process from flowering. Ocotillo flowering is primarily a spring event, with the most robust blooms typically occurring from March through June. This timing is no accident; it perfectly aligns with the migratory patterns of hummingbirds, their primary pollinators. When the first rains arrived on June 1st, the peak of this primary flowering season was already behind us. While ocotillos can produce sporadic, less-intense blooms in the summer, the plant's immediate priority after a prolonged



Fouquieria splendens, ocotillo
Photo By: Steve Watts

dry spell is to replenish its energy reserves and hydrate. The plant uses the energy from its new leaves to do just that. Flowering is an incredibly energy-intensive process, and if the plant's resources have been depleted by a long period of drought, it will wisely prioritize vegetative growth (leafing) over reproduction. So, while our ocotillos look vibrant and healthy, they are simply being smart desert dwellers. They've decided to allocate their resources to strengthening themselves now, ensuring their long-term survival, and saving their energy for a spectacular bloom next spring.

Keep an eye out for them in March and April—with the recent hydration and extended period of photosynthesis, they might just put on an even more impressive show next year. And as always, thank you for your curiosity and for helping us appreciate the intricate strategies of our unique desert flora!

K-12 EDUCATION

The K-12 Education Outreach: The TCSS K-12 Education Outreach team received requests to begin classroom teaching the second week of school. So far, we've taught six fourth- and fifth-grade classes, including gifted students. At present, we're receiving requests through November, so were expecting a busy semester.

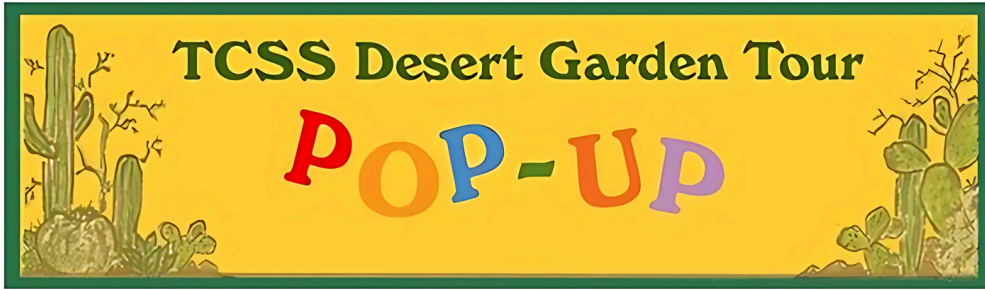
S-cuk Son/Tucson celebrated its 250+ birthday on August 23 at the Presidio San Agustin. Along with entertainment from many cultures, 40 vendor and exhibitor tables were set up throughout the neighborhood for a community celebration of All Things Tucson. Edie Campbell and Kris Thompson introduced a lot of visitors to our club and helped them create saguaro seed terrariums. They even had a chance to visit with Mayor Romero who was fascinated by the little cacti.



A PHOTOGRAPHER FROM OUR LOCAL PAPER TOOK THIS PICTURE AT TUCSON'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION ON SATURDAY EVENING.



GARDEN TOURS



If you would like to share what you've created in your desert garden with TCSS members please consider being on a TCSS Desert Garden Pop-Up Tour. These tours are usually held on Saturday mornings for about 4 hours. Our Garden Tour Committee will help arrange all of the planning and publicity so that members can take a leisurely tour of your landscape. The tour date is up to you, but we do need at least 4 weeks lead time in order to take photos and get all of the details into our monthly newsletter.

If you would like to consider having your garden on tour, please fill out the application on our website by clicking on this link [popup_tour_application.pdf](#)

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?
PLEASE CONTACT:

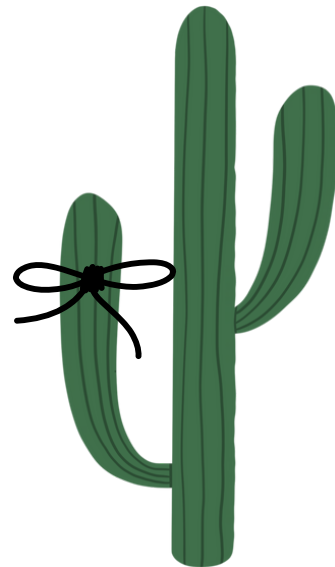


GARDEN TOURS
GARDENTOURS@TUCSONCACTUS.ORG



A happy bee pollinating a *Cochemiea* (*Mammillaria*) *grahamii*
Photo By: Brian Vandervoet

**DON'T FORGET TO
SEND IN YOUR BEST
PLANT PICTURES!**



GOOD-TIME SILENT AUCTION

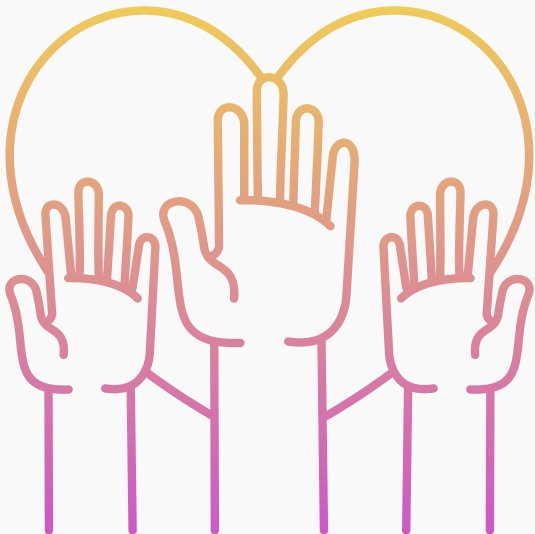
It is time once again for our annual Good Time Silent Auction! This event has been a Tucson Cactus Succulent Society tradition for 60 years and is a great opportunity to find some rare plants to bid on. We will be using our Amphi Cactus Sales Site which is easy to access and will be under shade cover. Enter on 4th Ave. from either Limberlost or Wetmore. Entrance gates will be clearly marked.

This is a celebration! There will be Silent Auctions, Free Stuff, Plants and Garden related items, \$5.00 and \$10.00 Sale Tables, and most important FREE ICE CREAM with all the toppings!

We will start the set-up at 1:00 pm. Please bring your plants, pots, and garden related items to the check-in area between 1:00 pm and 2:30 pm for inclusion in this event. All we ask is that your plants are free of disease and insects. Bid sheets will be available at the September meeting and in this newsletter for your convenience. Just cut, fill out the name of the item, your name, and leave the rest blank. We will finish the process when you bring the items for the auction tables. We will be glad to help determine which plants will go on the free, \$5.00, \$10.00 tables, or in the silent auctions.

The party will start at 3:00 pm with the first silent auction ending at about 3:25pm and then about every 20 minutes thereafter. All you have to do is SIGN-IN, Get A Bid Number, and then keep bidding until you hear "PENCILS DOWN STEP AWAY FROM THE TABLE".

We need volunteers for set-up, sales, and clean-up. Come help, ask questions, talk with friends, and have fun! Please feel free to bring your family and friends to this event. You don't have to be a member to bring plants or buy them, just come and enjoy the event. Everyone Is Welcome. More information call (520) 256-2447.



Volunteers
needed

GOOD-TIME SILENT AUCTION

Bid sheets for the silent auction will be available when you arrive at the event. The Board has adopted the same policy as we had at previous silent auctions with high value special silent auction plants. These items will have a value substantially higher than the opening minimum bid of \$20.00 or more negotiated with the donor. If the item sells for at least the opening bid the donor receives the opening bid price and any amount above that goes to the society. There are always special and/or rare plants that will pique your interest. In the past, we have had at least 3 separate silent auctions during the afternoon. Pots, plants, special cuttings, books, art, tools etc. are welcome donations for these silent auctions. Free Plants and plant related items will be available starting at 3:30 pm.

[illegible]

GOOD TIME SILENT AUCTION

DATE: SEPT 21

TIME: 3:00P-5:00P



LOCATION: 4342 N. 4TH AVE.

(BETWEEN WETMORE AND LIMBERLOST)



SILENT AUCTION ITEM.
6FT ADENIUM HYBRID.
STARTING BID WILL BE \$250

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JOIN US FOR THIS GREAT GATHERING!

CSSA CONVENTION 2009

"THE YELLOW SPINE *FEROCACTUS WISLIZENI*" FEATURED IN THE TCSS CONVENTION BOOKLET 2009

The following article was part of the convention booklet for the 2009 Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) convention held in Tucson. TCSS will be presenting this cultivar to guests at the 2027 CSSA Convention. Bach's and B&B Cactus are growing them. We're still looking for a common name for the cultivar, if you have any suggestions please submit to: newsletter@tucsoncactus.org

Chris Monrad has been a TCSS member for nearly 20 years (now paid life member) and was a co-founder of the Cactus Rescue Program in 1999. During the numerous cactus rescues that he assisted with, he began noticing and marveling at the wide variety of spination patterns (black, brown, maroon, short, long, short, fat, nearly straight, highly recurved, etc.) present in our local barrel cactus, *Ferocactus wislizeni* (this interest also spilled over into the Ocotillo/*Fouquieria*, but that is another story).

This fascination led to the keen interest in the entire genus *Ferocactus* and also the genus *Echinocactus*. His collection of these plants now includes several plants of nearly every species in each genus and he is no dedicated to the pollination and seed collection for many of these species as well. During an early cactus rescue project at the Saddlebrooke near Catalina, Chris noticed a barrel cactus specimen with bright and pure yellow spines with a strong golden cast. This plant would be the first of only five such specimens that would be collected by Chris over the next five years of rescue projects, with sites ranging from Saddlebrooke Ranch north of Oracle Junction to a new school site in Corona de Tucson, over 45 miles away from Saddlebrooke. Chris estimates this spined/yellow flowered variety to occur in something like one in every 5,000 or 10,000 barrel cacti, based upon his numerous plant surveys and rescue activities.

Soon after acquiring the first two specimens, Chris wondered about the possibility of performing selective pollination between those two plants to develop a purpose-bred *Ferocactus* cultivar and began to consult with other noted *Ferocactus* propagators in the area. Some of the early results from the first efforts were encouraging and there are approximately 15 six year old yellows spined plants that may bloom this summer.

CSSA CONVENTION 2009

The summer of 2005 seed crop benefited from the presence of four available seed parents and the first crop of the over one thousand seeds was planted in the early 2006 with outstanding germination results and the ultimate reward of having numerous never-before-available plants to be given to attendees of the 2009 CSSA Convention at La Paloma and the celebration of the Golden Anniversary of the TCSS.



TCSS DIRECTORY

TCSS OFFICERS

Terms expire December 31, 2026

PRESIDENT: Dick Wiedhopf	• president@Tucsoncactus.org
VICE PRESIDENT: Vonn Watkins	• vp@Tucsoncactus.org
SECRETARY: Barbara Watts	• secretary@Tucsoncactus.org
TREASURER: Donna Ellis	• treasurer@Tucsoncactus.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Terms expire December 31 of year indicated

RAY FISHER (2027)	KRIS THOMPSON (2026)	BRIAN VANDERVOET (2025)
RANDY HELLWIG (2027)	EDIE CAMPBELL (2026)	BRAD HAECKEL (2025)
AMY PEARSE (2027)	JULIE SHULICK (2026)	JOEL FONTAINE (2025)
CLARKE STEPHENS (2027)		STEVE WATTS (2025)
CSSA AFFILIATE REP: MICHIEL PILLET (2025)		



Cochemiea (Mammillaria) grahamii - I am still small but showy
Photo By: Albert Everaerts



Cochemiea (Mammillaria) grahamii - flower explosion after the first monsoon rain
Photo By: Albert Everaerts

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Cactus Rescue: Donna Ellis & Randy Hellwig • cactus@tucsoncactus.org

Urban Rescues: Julie Shulick • desertrat@shulick.com

Education: Kris Thompson • education@tucsoncactus.org

Free Plants: Mark Stubbs • plants@tucsoncactus.org

Florilegium: Joyce Peters • art@tucsoncactus.org

Garden Tours: Patsy Frannea • tours@tucsoncactus.org

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Programs: Vonn Watkins • programs@tucsoncactus.org

Publicity: Patrick Cavanaugh • publicity@tucsoncactus.org

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Research: Doug Rowsell • research@tucsoncactus.org

Field Trips/Tours: Open

Vendor Coordinator: Dale Johnson • vendors@tucsoncactus.org

Plant Sales: Open

Field Guide Sales: Susan Durham & John Durham • books@tucsoncactus.org

Conservation: Michiel Pillet • conservation@tucsoncactus.org

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Webmaster: Julie Schulick • webmaster@tucsoncactus.org

Deadline for newsletters articles or photos: Third Thursday of the Month

TCSS Web Page: www.tucsoncactus.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS 2025

DONATIONS AS OF
AUGUST 25TH, 2025

SAHAH LOSANO

KRIS & ROB PAWLOSKI

MARIA MARIN

LINDA ATKIELSKI

JENNIFER ROBINSON

SUSAN & FRANK JUDRICH

GRETCHEN GAMMELL

MAUREEN DARLING



Trichocereus terscheckii - Early morning buzz
Photo By: Albert Everaerts

SEPTEMBER

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Monthly Meeting 7:00pm	5	6
7	8	9 Board Meeting 7:00pm	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Good Time Silent Auction 3-5	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM INFORMATION

LOCATION



FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- If you are not feeling well, **PLEASE** stay home and join us on Zoom.
- Plant Giveaways (only in person, not shown on Zoom).
- Refreshments provided by TCSS Volunteers
- Free Plants offered by TCSS

ZOOM

[Click Here](#) or scan to join the Meeting



Having trouble logging on?
[Click Here](#) for some helpful tips

BOARD MEETING

[Click Here](#) or scan to join the Meeting



MEETING LOCATION

Temporary Meeting Site

Our monthly September meeting will be held at the Murphey Gallery at St. Philip's in the Hills Church, 4440 North Campbell. Located at the northeast corner of River and Campbell, it's just a stone's throw from our former meeting space at the Junior League.

The property can be accessed from westbound River Road by turning onto Camino Escuela or the next driveway before the light at Campbell. Watch for St. Philip's signs.

Going north on Campbell, take an immediate right onto the property after you go through the intersection and the road narrows.

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, September 4th at 7:00PM



Reminder

MEETING REFRESHMENTS

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