

CACTUS COURIER

Newsletter of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society

Volume 56, Number 3

March 2010

The Meeting is the 4th Saturday

March 27, 2010

**Joslyn Senior Center
724 N. Broadway, Escondido**

12 Noon!!



Apricot Mallow (Mike Bigelow)



Fan Palms and Brittlebush



Ghost Flower (Mike Bigelow)

“Plant Strategies for Survival in a Harsh Environment”

• Mike Bigelow •

From **Mike Bigelow**: “I spent 37 years in the newspaper business and retired in 1999 from the San Francisco Chronicle as the foreign editor. My wife and I moved to the Temecula Valley in 2001 and immediately went looking for a playground. We found it in *Anza-Borrego Desert State Park*, which has 650,000 acres, and thriving societies in paleontology, archeology, and botany. My wife and I are certified volunteer naturalists for the park and the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association's Nature Center, and lead hikes and give programs for visitors to acquaint them with this fascinating desert. I am a member of the local Botany Society, and last year was certified as a parobotanist, which qualifies me to collect plant specimens for the San Diego Natural History Museum's Plant Atlas project and the State Park's herbarium. I am an award-winning [no kidding! – Eleanore] amateur photographer and have taken more than a 1,000 pictures of desert wildflowers, some of which I will share with the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society on **March 27th**.

At the State Park, I present a wildflower program to visitors that not only shows off the beautiful desert blooms but also informs them about the plants' habitats and strategies for survival and pollination. In addition, I talk about the medicinal properties of some of these plants that were used for thousands of years by Native Americans in the Anza-Borrego desert.”



Desert Dandelion (Mike Bigelow)

BOARD MEETING • PLANT SALES • BRAG PLANTS • EXCHANGE TABLE

REFRESHMENTS

Jean O’Daniel

Libbi Salvo

Lina Paul

Red Bernal

Don Nelson

February Brag Plants

Cactus:

- 1st *Ferocactus* Crest
Stan Yalof
- 2nd *Oroya neoperuviana*
Peter Walkowiak
- 3rd *Stenocactus multicostatus*
Peter Walkowiak



Succulents:

- 1st *Veltheimia bracteata*
Ron Chisum
- 2nd *Aloe sessilis*
Andrew Wilson
- 2nd *Agave* (Kelly Griffin Hybrid)
Ron Chisum



Plant-of-the-Month:

March

Cactus – **Thelocactus**



Succulents – **African Pachypodiums**



Volunteers are needed to do the **Plant of the Month** in **June**. The only requirement is a willingness to talk about any succulent plant that you love and wish to share with other members. You can do one Plant of the Month, cactus or succulent, or both. If you are interested, contact Peter Walkowiak.

Get Ready for the
2nd Annual Plant Sale in May!



Palomar Cactus and
Succulent Society

PLANT SALE
May 1st
10 - 4

at Alta Vista Gardens
1270 Vale Terrace Dr.
Vista, CA 92084

On-line directions:
<http://www.altavistagardens.org/html/directions.html>

Directions to Alta Vista Gardens:

From the 78, take the Vista Village Drive exit and travel north. Vista Village Drive changes its name to East Vista Way. Follow to Vale Terrace Drive and turn right. Continue past the Main Entrance and turn left at the second entrance to Brengle Terrace Park, continue past the Senior Center and follow to the crest of the hill.

Turn left at the "Welcome, Alta Vista Gardens" sign and left again. Follow the road around to our Garden House Headquarters.



Garden Days
Dick Henderson

Garden Day will be the first Saturday, **April 3rd**. If you would like to see what all this rain has done for the Garden, Dick and his crew will be glad to show you around.



Henderson Canyon

Officers • Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

Vicki Broughton – President

Peter Walkowiak – Vice-President

Lorie Johansen – Secretary

Dennis Miller – Treasurer & Membership Co-Chair

Bruce Barry – Board Member

Dick Kubiak – Board Member

Dick Henderson – Board Member & Garden Chair

Mary Kaho – Board Member

Brita Miller – Librarian

Ron Chisum – Refreshments & Speakers

Eleanore Hewitt – Newsletter & Membership Co-Chair



North County Times
March 6, 2010

**Wildflower show could be best in years
...Cool weather has delayed color peak**

By DAVE DOWNEY - ddowney@californian.com



Silver-dollar sized blossoms can be seen in the crown of a barrel cactus near the top of Yaqui Pass Road south of Borrego Springs in the Anza Borrego Desert State Park. Experts say this year's wildflower bloom could be spectacular thanks to a wet winter. (Photo by Bill Wechter)

The curtain is rising on what experts believe may be one of the most breathtaking wildflower shows in memory.

Bloom seekers are descending on desert wildflower hot spots and soon will be fanning out into coastal and inland valleys to feast their eyes on colorful carpets of blossoms.

"The crowds are just getting wound up," said Michael Rodriques, regional interpretive specialist for California State Parks in Borrego Springs, the gateway to the 600,000-acre Anza-Borrego Desert State Park in eastern San Diego County.

The anticipation is building.

That's partly because of recent disappointments.

"Last year was pretty pitiful," said Kay Madore, botanist at the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve in Southwest Riverside County.

And the year before wasn't much better.

But with Southern California enjoying its wettest winter since 2005 and rain falling everywhere, chances are good spring 2010 will deliver an exceptional show, flower experts say.

"We had pretty good timing for the rain," Rodriques said. "They were long-soaking rains, which is very important in terms of getting moisture down to the seed stock."

Most of Southern California has received as much or more moisture than falls, on average, for an entire year.

And the product of that moisture is about to explode.

Fred Roberts of Oceanside, rare-plant botanist for the San Diego and Riverside county chapters of the California Native Plant Society, said that, for example, "the Mojave Desert is probably going to be just stunning this year."

Behind schedule

At the same time, the region has been having cooler-than-normal weather.

"Because of the cold temperatures brought in by the winter storms that have lingered into March, everything is a little behind schedule," said Rob Hicks, a Riverside County park interpreter on the Santa Rosa Plateau.

At the plateau, the profusion of color tends to peak in late March, Hicks said. But this time around the best viewing may be in April.

Likewise, Anza-Borrego's peak normally hits around March 10, and Rodriques said this year it may instead arrive two to three weeks into the month.

The delay comes with a risk: That the show will fail to live up to expectations.

Up on the Riverside County plateau, the blossoms could be eclipsed.

"If the flowers wait too long to bloom, the annual European grasses will grow too tall for people to enjoy much of the color of the flowers," Hicks said. "The grasses grow real quick regardless of the temperature. And the flowers sometimes lose out on the battle for attention."

The longer flowers wait to pop out on the desert floor in eastern San Diego County, the greater the chance they could be eclipsed by exotic, fast-growing Saharan mustard plants, Rodriques said.

Then there's the possibility the mercury could soar.

"If it suddenly went to 95 and windy, it would just kill the flowers," Rodriques said.

"But that's not likely," he said.

Shooting stars

And already there is much to see, flower watchers say.

Rodriques said Anza-Borrego visitors are seeing clumps of purple sand verbena, yellow desert sunflowers, lavender monkey flowers, white-purple desert lilies, white dune evening primroses and the tubular red flowers of chuparosa bushes, among other blossoms.

Rodriques called the desert lilies some of "the most beautiful flowers ever."

But he said visitors should be prepared to enjoy blossoms with their eyes or cameras, because state law prohibits picking them.

Santa Rosa visitors, meanwhile, are being treated to the blossoming chocolate lily, red maid, milkmaid, yellow carpet, wild hyacinth, Johnny Jump-up and shooting star, Hicks and Madore said.

For most of those plants, the name strongly hints at the color. In the case of the shooting star, the hue can vary from purple to white, Hicks said.

"They look kind of look like shooting stars," he said. "But they don't last very long. Like a shooting star, they are gone before you know it."

Roberts said the plateau ---- as well as Walker Canyon along Interstate 15 north of Lake Elsinore and the Gavilan Hills lying to the east ---- is among the best places to see California poppies. Their distinctive orange blossoms will be popping in a few weeks, he said.

The plateau also is known for its two large vernal pools that leave behind colorful quilts of flowers as they gradually recede in April and May.

In late spring, Roberts said, wildflowers will creep up slopes as snow melts to paint Palomar Mountain and Cuyamaca Rancho State Park in San Diego County and the Idyllwild area of Riverside County.

As a general rule, flowers will be most brilliant in places that have not been disturbed by development or were recently scoured by wildfire, he said.

Looking for spring wildflowers

According to the plant experts, good viewing places include:

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park; visitor center is off Palm Canyon Drive in Borrego Springs.

Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve; visitor center is off Clinton Keith Road, west of Interstate 15.

Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve, south of Del Mar.

Harford Springs Park in the Gavilan Hills, along Gavilan Road east of Interstate 15 and south of Cajalco Road.

Mission Trails Regional Park off Mission Gorge Road in east San Diego.

Black Mountain Park, off Carmel Valley Road in Rancho Penasquitos.

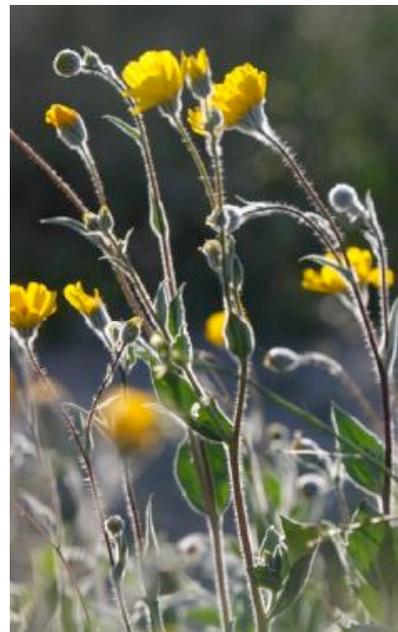
Antelope Valley California Poppy State Natural Reserve, west of Lancaster. Take Interstate 5 north, Highway 138 east, turn right on 170th Street, turn left on Lancaster Road, drive 2 miles.

For information on Anza-Borrego, call 760-767-5311 or visit

http://parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=638.

For information on Santa Rosa Plateau call 951-677-6951 or visit

<http://www.riversidecountyparks.org/locations/nature-historic-centers/santa-rosa-plateau/>.



Desert sunflowers sway in the breeze in a field along Henderson Canyon Road in the Anza Borrego Desert State Park. (Photo by Bill Wechter)



Sand verbena grow in a field along Henderson Canyon Road north of Borrego Springs in the Anza Borrego Desert State Park. (Photo by Bill Wechter)



Tough Course!



2010 MEETING SCHEDULE

27 March	Joslyn Center
24 April	Palomar Garden Potluck
22 May	Joslyn Center
26 June	Joslyn Center
24 July	Joslyn Center
28 August	Quail Garden Potluck
25 September	Joslyn Center
23 October	Plant Show & Sale
20 November	Joslyn Center

NOTE !!! 3rd Saturday !!

18 December	Joslyn Center
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NOTE !!! 3rd Saturday !!



John Tashjian's Garden (I bet they've been to the Fair!)

Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

P.O. Box 840, Escondido, CA 92033
Membership Application

I/We wish to join/renew membership in the
Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

\$20.00 Single Membership
\$25.00 Dual Membership (Same Address)
(1/2 price after June 30th)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to:
"Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society"
P.O. Box 840, Escondido, CA 92033

This **March** *Cactus Courier* will be your **last issue** if you haven't renewed for 2010!

Time to take care of it now!!!

I have been working on the email Newsletter project for several months. For people who are having trouble opening the PDFs I send, check to see if you have the free "Adobe Reader" application. Macs use "Preview." My computer geek (aka, my husband) says the link is: <http://get.adobe.com/reader>

The Ramona Garden Club Garden Tour & Plant Sale



Date: April 10
Time: 9:00am-3:30pm



Proceeds from the 2010
Annual Ramona Spring
Garden Tour & Plant Sale

will benefit the
Ramona Garden Club
Scholarship Fund

and other community projects.



Tickets- \$15

Tickets are available
after Feb 24th from
Ramona Interiors
707 Main Street
Ramona, CA
or
at the Plant Sale on the
day of the Tour.

Contact Person:
Georgie Suitor
(760) 788-5961

Raffle Tickets

\$1—\$5

Win a Garden
Themed Basket
filled with
garden gadgets!

Plant Sale Location
First Business Bank
1315 Main Street
Ramona, CA