

# Central Spine

November, 2010

Newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

*An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America*

On the Web at [www.centralarizonacactus.org](http://www.centralarizonacactus.org)

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## NOVEMBER 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting

### "Growing Winter Hardy Cacti" by Jon Weeks

As November draws to a close, this will be an appropriate topic. Jon, owner of Landscape Cacti in Tucson, has spent years learning which cacti grow best in the unique desert environment in Arizona. Plants need to tolerate a temperature range from 115° F all the way down to the mid- teens.

No plant grower who lived in Arizona in 2007 will ever forget the cold temperatures that killed or damaged hundreds of species. Jon will tell us the plants that we can grow that will prevent you from experiencing the heart break of mushy plants.

Jon received a Ph.D. from the University of Arizona in 1986 and worked as a research scientist at the University from 1986 to 1992. During that time, he conducted his research along the coast of the Gulf of California in the Mexican state of Sonora.

Members had many plants to choose from at the October silent auction.  
Photo by Diana Decker

## President's Letter from Steve Martinez

I can't believe how fast this year went, but I think I made the most of it so far. The CACSS has been pretty active too, trips, workshops, etc.. The Tucson caravan nursery trip was a lot of fun again; we made it to four nurseries and had a nice lunch stop in the middle. I would like to thank everyone who participated in our Silent Auction either by donating plants, buying plants, or both. It appeared to be financially successful for the Club. On another note, I certainly like seeing everyone mingling before the meetings, and I even let the meetings start a little late; however, we will try to start them on time (2:00 P. M.) so why not come a little early and chat. There is usually someone there thirty minutes or so early. I am just hours away from heading to the airport for a two week cactus-viewing trip to Argentina, so I will not be at the November meeting.

See you at the holiday party ... Steve M.

## *SUCCULENTIA*

### at the Farm at South Mountain

Friday & Saturday, December 3rd & 4th, 2010

Come Out for Light Refreshments 10 am until 5 pm

\* Steve Martinez has created a specialty cactus and succulent nursery with rare and unusual specimens that you won't find anywhere else in the Phoenix area.

\* Plants are available for sale at every skill level - from beginner to expert.

\* Exquisitely staged show-winning specimens on display.

6106 S. 32nd St, Phoenix, AZ 85042 (just south of Southern on the west side of 32nd Street)

602.688.4339 /www.succulentia.com

## Holiday Potluck

**You still have time to RSVP for the Holiday Potluck on Sunday, December 12!**

**1 to 4:30 pm, Mountain View Park Community Center, 8625 E. Mountain View Road, Scottsdale, AZ**

We have room for 150 members. Join us for a memorable time Bring your holiday spirit and a plant to exchange. If you bring a plant, you may take a plant.

Please bring an appetizer, a main course or dessert, with utensils for serving it. You'll also need to bring your own plates, silverware and napkins. As always, Gard and Loren will make a great punch and serve coffee.

**IT'S VERY, VERY IMPORTANT TO RSVP to Jo Davis by phone: 480-839-3792.** She must know what you're bringing so she can coordinate the menu. Please get your reservation in now. If you leave a message for Jo, be sure to include your phone number, so she can call you back.

**RESERVATION DEADLINE:  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2.**

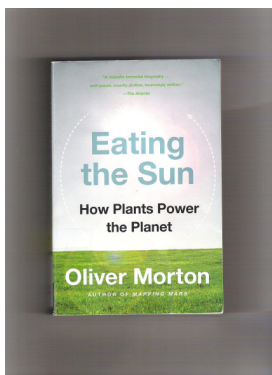
**December Newsletter Deadline: December 11**

## Book Review by Tim Cullison,

### Eating the Sun

by Oliver Morton, (Harper Collins Publishers, 2007)

There are hundreds of thousands of pigment pools and sunlight traps in every green cell and hundreds of thousands of cells in every leaf. This is because, as Oliver Morton says, photosynthesis is the defining property of plants. On any day, 4,000 trillion kilowatt hours of sun energy reach the top of Earth's atmosphere. Only a small fraction of one percent is captured by plants. This is equal to the energy stored in all the world's nuclear weapons. In that day, the sun energy captured will be used to turn hundreds of millions of tons of carbon dioxide into food and living tissue.



Photosynthesis is a microscopic process but, as Malcolm Gladwell says in his book, *The Tipping Point*, seemingly small causes can have fantastically large outcomes. The production of energy requires that excess electrons must be produced. In the right circumstances, oxygen will pull them off anything. As a result aerobic (oxygen-using) metabolisms can provide much more energy than anaerobic (non-oxygen-using) ones--enough energy to power large complex organisms like ferns and flamingoes. All large multi-cellular creatures

need the energy levels that only oxygen can provide. And so, no such creatures were possible before photosynthesis came to the Earth.

*Eating the Sun* is a marvelous compendium of the origin of photosynthesis, its history and its essential niche in the world. Plant lovers will find page after page of interesting facts. For example, the biological genesis of chloroplasts, the critical components of plant cells and responsible for the actual mechanism of photosynthesis, is now considered settled. The early eukaryotes (larger and more advanced than bacteria) could survive by eating bacteria whole, as amoebas do today. The evidence shows that every chloroplast in every plant in the world is descended from one particular cyanobacterium that was swallowed by one particular eukaryote. But it wasn't digested, it stayed alive and reproduced along with the eukaryote, providing photosynthesis along the way. This event led to plants and algae and has outcompeted all newcomers. Growing food within one's own body was obviously a very major advantage.

As we find out in Eating the Sun, figuring out how plants work is not rocket science . . . it's a lot more complicated than that

For advanced reading on photosynthesis, Oliver Morton recommends:

Blankenship, Robert E. (2002) Molecular Mechanisms of Photosynthesis, Blackwell Science. I've read it and it's very advanced.

Falkowski, Paul G. and Raven, John A. (1997) Aquatic Photosynthesis, Blackwell Science.

Walker, David Alan (2000) Like Clockwork: An Unfinished Story, Oxygraphics

[Yes, we included JULIE PLATH'S poem in the October newsletter, but gave the wrong person credit. That's why we're including it again.]

## Erik

How many Falls?

A season, fleeting, of grace, soft breeze, and passing wonder.

See God's light tracing vermillion and gold cloud-scaped sunsets

How many Falls? I wonder.

It is a transitional season; yielding vibrant new life past summer's heat.

Savor the mild star filled nights; breezy days shine umber and purple.

How many Falls? Few, it seems.

It floats, preceding winter, that cold and dead time, promises broken.

Perceptions of black and white, denies the riot of autumn and closes a door.

How few Falls. Done for me.

In a time so short, softness and fading light reduces tomorrow's possibilities.

From Rebecca Senior, DBG Desert Landscaper School Coordinator:

Erik Anderson was in the Desert Landscaper School's Saturday class from Sept 08 to May 09. The class members got to know each other well. At the graduation ceremony, one of our creative students wrote an "Ode to the Desert Landscaper School" and read it at the graduation ceremony:

Here's an excerpt from "Ode to the Desert Landscaper School":

" The instructors answered all our questions,  
Like why is shearing shrubs so barbaric?  
And if the questions were really tough,  
They told us just go ask Erik."

Erik is missed very much at the Garden, by me and all the people he touched here. He brought us plants, pictures and stories about his hunting excursions.  
Comment by Rebecca Senior

I will miss my table buddy, Erik, as we always sat together at the meetings. His library was at one end of the table and I was at the other end, greeting guests and members. As always I asked him if he wanted a coke. He would usually say yes and I wouldn't take his money. One day, he showed up with the smallest bottle of Tequila, a gift for me, as a thank you for all the cans of coke he drank. I will miss his little chats and his smiling face. Jo Davis

Thanks to **Paul Schueneman** for taking over Erik's duties as Librarian while the club finds a permanent replacement.

## My Friend Maury Clapp

As many members know, Maury Clapp passed away in January, 2010. I'd like to tell you a little about him. He was a member of our society since 1998. He very seldom missed a meeting, driving in from Tucson with his wife, Carol. His specialty was Echinopsis hybrids. He had many different varieties. He was also a vendor for years at our annual show and sale with his Echinopsis that were in flower and sold out quickly. He entered a Mammillaria at the show one year and won People's Choice. For our Christmas potluck, he always made a great cheese cake. I will miss it this year.

- Jo Davis



Maury & Carol Clapp, 2006 Photo by Doug Dawson

## Photo from The August CACSS California Trip

You can find many more California Trip Photos at [photobucket.com](http://photobucket.com). Enter the username "cacss" and the password "succulent." There are two albums. Select the one named "CACSS 2010 Calif Trip" and start the slide show (button in upper right hand corner).



Birds of a feather flock together...at Solana Beach.  
The red ones are CACSS members.

Photo by Wendy Barrett

# PLANT QUESTIONS??? WHOM TO CONTACT!!!

## DOUG DAWSON

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Specializations include Flora of Namibia, Growing from Seed, Lithops, other Mesembs, and Melocactus.

## MIKE GALLAGHER

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Specializations include Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti, and *Turbinicarpus*.

## STEVE PLATH

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Specializations include *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Cyphostemma*, *Echinocereus*, *Fouquieria*, *Thelocactus*, General Propagation, and Desert Revegetation.

## BOB TORREST

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Specializations include Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees and Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, *Trichocereus*, and *Opuntia*.

## 2010 CACSS Officers

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