

# Central Spine

September, 2011

## *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)

*Publication of material in the Central Spine does not imply agreement with the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of the CACSS, nor does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material by the CACSS, or the Central Spine, regardless of any position or office held by the author. All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of the author.*

### **CACCS Meeting: Sunday, Sept. 25**

2 pm, Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden

**Presentation: Doug Dawson and Steve Martinez-Their Adventure in Namibia**



Epupa Falls, Namibia -----The central large rocky area surrounded by the falls on both sides has at least four large dormant-looking trees. These are baobabs (*Adansonia digitata*). Also to the left of and slightly lower is another area with two smaller, swollen-trunked baobabs by the falls.

Photo by Doug Dawson

**October Newsletter Deadline: Oct. 14, 2011**

## **2011 CACSS Officers**

President: Steve Martinez .. .....602-688-4339  
altrigo2@aol.com  
Vice-President: Lee Brownson . . .480-951-4945  
lsbrownson@cox.net  
Secretary: Lois Schneberger. . ....480-946-8373  
lschneberger@cox.net  
Treasurer: Wayne Whipple .. .. 480-460-3623  
w7676@msn.com

## **2011 Board of Directors**

### **Serving through December, 2011**

Doug Dawson . . . . . 480-893-1207  
dawsonlithops@hotmail.com  
Sue Tyrrel ... ..480-946-3499  
styrrel@cox.net  
Cindy Capek .....623-979-9389  
ronlucap@aol.com

### **Serving through December, 2012**

Gard Roper ..... 602-996-9745  
Cheryl Brown ..... 480-352-7019  
rp62@intergate.com  
Jack Meharian ..... 954-540-5971  
jackmeharian@att.net  
Debora Life ..... 480-580-3813  
lifedebora@yahoo.com  
Beth Kirkpatrick ..... 480-275-4833  
2kirks@cox.net

**Beth Kirkpatrick**  
**Chair of the Membership Committee**

### **Welcome to New Members**

**Debra J. Hunt**  
**Summer Streeter**  
**C. Ray Peery**  
**Lynda Michaelson**  
**Tammi and Stephen Bell**

## **September 25 Meeting Presentation**

**Doug Dawson and Steve Martinez**, CACSS members, will co-present a narrative of their recent trip to Namibia. This southern Africa country contains some of the most unusual and amazing succulents found anywhere in the world. Doug has been to Namibia before, but this was Steve's first visit, so you will hear about the trip from two perspectives. Southern Africa is very far away and most of us will never visit there, so this is a wonderful opportunity to see some of the fantastic plants we grow as they appear in habitat.

## **2011 Meeting Schedule**

Note the change to our normal meeting schedule because of the Thanksgiving weekend. Also, note the date of our Christmas Potluck.

### **October 30 The Big Deal, Super Large Silent Auction**

See article on page 3 for details.

### **November 20** (in place of November 27th) **Presentation: Gary James-Ethiopia**

Gary has traveled to the far corners of the Earth, in search of seeing new plants and experiencing different cultures. He will present a program about the Plants and People of Ethiopia. We have never had a program about this country because not many people go there. Put this presentation on your calendar.

### **December 11- Party time!** **Annual Holiday Celebration**



## **Christmas Potluck**

**Sunday, December 11**  
**Mountain View Park, Scottsdale**

**Your hostesses this year will be**  
**Dana, Jo and Debra.**

**Look for more information in the**  
**October Central Spine.**



## President's Letter

I spent the first Saturday of September at the symposium at the Huntington Botanical Gardens. I think it was one of the best that I've been to so far. The presentations were all excellent, with nice pacing of breaks, lunch, etc.

We took part in an interactive discussion about what is and is not a succulent plant. You would be surprised about the opinions on some plants. There actually is no scientific definition published anywhere, it seems.

Do you think you know the answer? Tell me what your idea is.

Maybe we could spend a few minutes at a meeting bandying this about. The interactive discussion meeting ended late in the evening, with an after-dinner presentation by Steven Hammer (one of the top guys in the world when it comes to Lithops, conophytums who rarely gives talks anymore) and with an unexpected musical component. He played

a Wagner piece for us! Beautifully performed, I must add.

I walked down the path to my vehicle admiring the up-lit tree canopy. It looked almost spooky but almost magical, too.

I was invited to spend the night at the house of a friend from one of the local California clubs. He and his wife were on the Argentina trip I took last year. We became friends in those two weeks together on the bus. It was nice to go to sleep with an open window and fresh air! I woke up Sunday to a 64 degree morning and went to see my friend's nursery before heading home.

What a great weekend! Now it's a week later as I write this and it looks like cooler weather is finally coming our way. It's time to plan some group activities and have some fun right here in Arizona.

See you at the meeting! Steve M.

---

### Silent Auction Sunday, October 30, 2011 Wildflower Pavilion, Desert Botanical Garden

I encourage you to attend the Silent Auction. It's a lot of fun and you'll have the opportunity to go home with some nice plants if you're the **Highest Bidder!**

Bring your plants from 12 pm to 1:30 pm. The auction starts at 2 pm. Make sure the bid sheet for each plant you bring for the auction includes the plant's name. Please bring your own boxes to carry plants home. Also bring a pen or pencil to place your bid on a bid sheet.

Hope to see you there. Let's spend some money!

By Jo Davis

**To suggest topics you'd like to see included in the *Central Spine*,  
and for article and photo submissions,**

**Contact the *Central Spine* Editor**

Diana Decker

[dianaldec@msn.com](mailto:dianaldec@msn.com) (602) 220-9825

## Namibia-May 06 - 26, 2011

Article and photos by Doug Dawson

Imagine how things would look here in our Arizona desert if it rained almost every day for 4 months in a row, and all of our arroyos were filled with water continually during that period. This is what did happen in the desert country of Namibia, Africa this year. Never in Namibian recorded history has the rainy season been nearly this accentuated. To make things even more dramatic, several months leading up to the severe rains were unusually dry. Wildfires were rampant and many game animals lost their lives.

My last trip to Namibia was in May, 2007, so I was excited to return to see what the country looked like after the rains this year. While making plans, I visited weather websites and it seemed like the rains would never end. Would we be rained on nearly every day and night like some friends who were there in early April? Luckily the weather broke when we arrived on May 6, and we experienced only sunny weather and a few very swollen streams and rivers to cross.

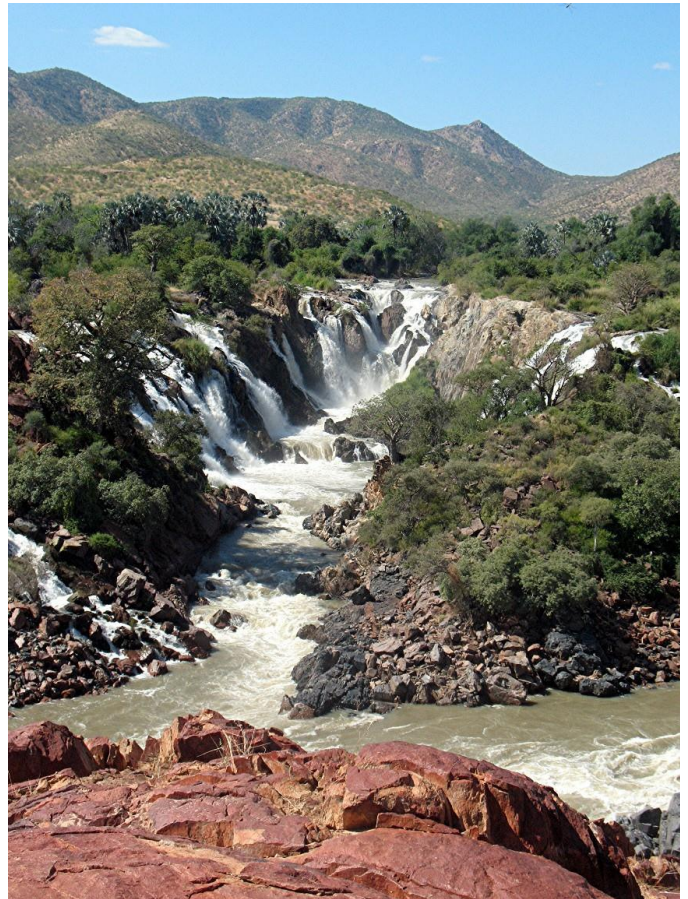
In the summer of 2010, I assembled our group: six Americans— including three are from our club: Woody Minnich, Steve Martinez, and myself. Also two Afrikaner friends from South Africa went with us. Having eight guys, we could make effective use of the rental of two four-seater 4X4 vehicles with a small supply trailer behind each.

Stretching north to south for over 800 miles, Namibia is one of Africa's most exotic deserts. We explored many areas from the northern border with Angola to the southern border with South Africa.

Some of the more dramatic plants in the north include Baobabs, Cyphostemmas, Pachypodiums, Adeniums, Sansevierias, Euphorbias, Commiphoras, and Aloes. Up in the northwest, the colorful Himba and Herero tribes make their homes. Their native attire, life-styles and crafts are fascinating.

In the southern half of the country we find Mesembs (including Lithops), interesting Euphorbias, Pelargoniums, Crassulas, Sarcocaulons,

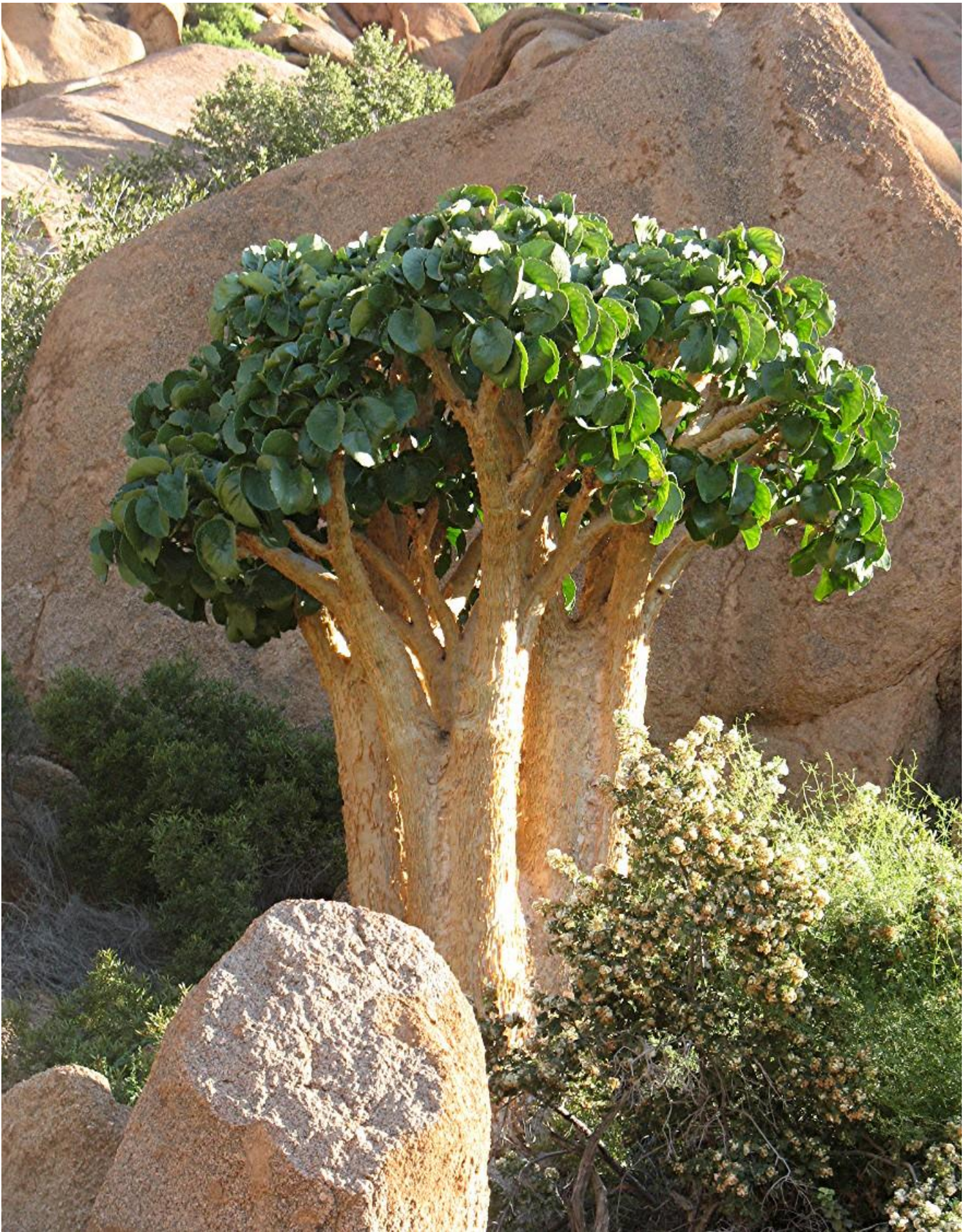
Aloes, and many other genera of fat plants. We saw beautiful succulents in the flats, intervening mountains and right up to the Atlantic shoreline. The plants were in prime condition, taking advantage of the rains. They displayed a bumper crop of blooms in May.



Epupa Falls

Scenery was spectacular. Parts of Namibia I could barely recognize due to the waving grasses in place of the normal gaunt landscapes for which Namibia is famous. Perhaps the most beautiful location was Epupa, at our northernmost point on the border with Angola. Epupa Falls with dozens of fingers of falling water upon brownish orange rocks was breathtaking. The baobabs perched on rock outcrops throughout the falls made for a fantasyland that rivals Disney.

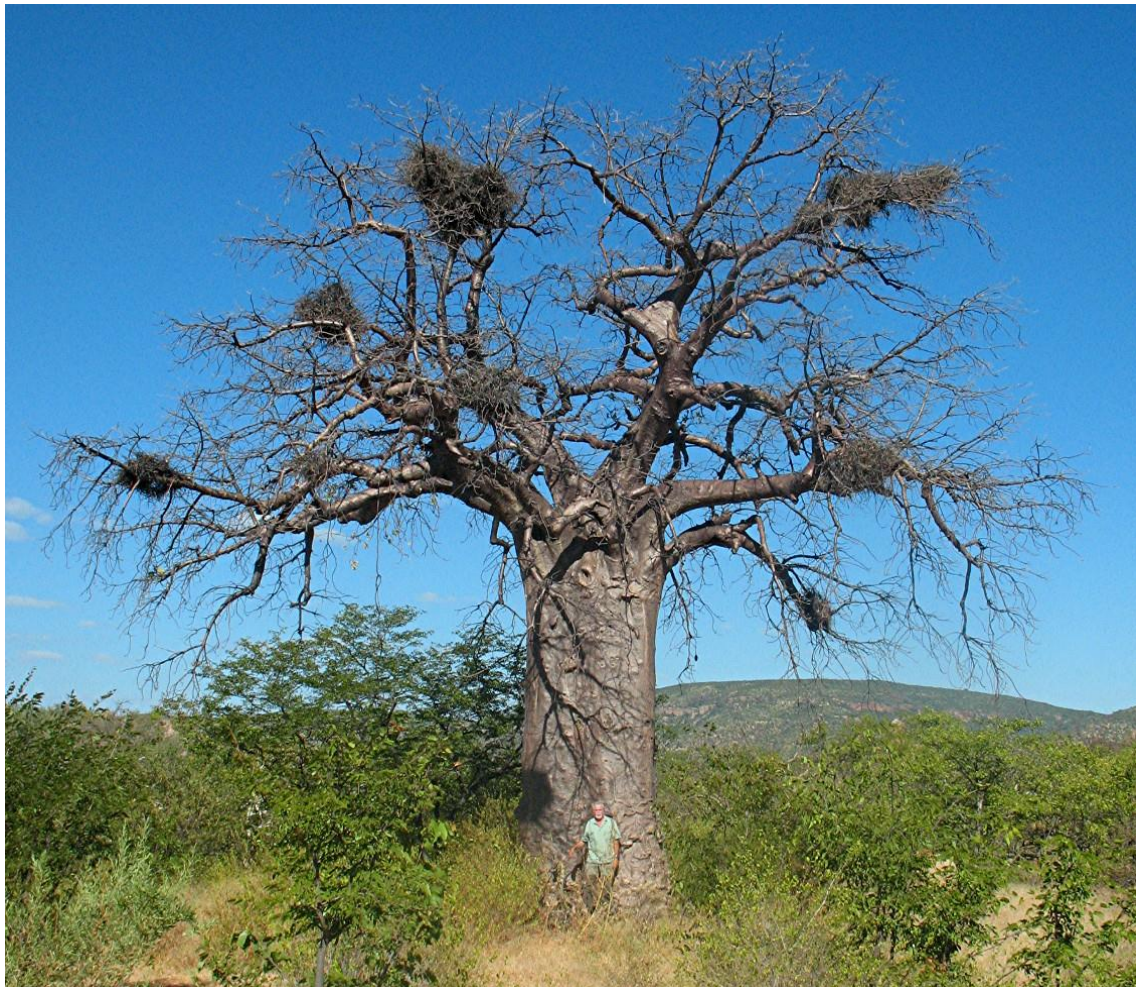
See more photos on the following pages.



*Cyphostemma currori*



Cyphostemma uter



Yes, that's Doug in front of the Adansonia digitata (Baobab)

Photo by one of Doug's travel buddies

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

Many CACSS members have experience with different kinds of succulent plants. I hope they will add their names to the following list (Just call or e-mail Bob Torrest—480-994-3868; robertst9114@msn.com).

For now the list is simply alphabetical with principal interests. When more members add their information, the list will be cross-referenced by topic.

### **DOUG DAWSON**

480-893-1207

dawsonlithops@hotmail.com

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

### **MIKE GALLAGHER**

602-942-8580

mgallagher26@cox.net

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

### **STEVE PLATH**

623-915-7615

revegdude1@juno.com

Specializations include *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Cyphostemma*, *Echinocereus*, *Fouquieria*, *Thelocactus*,

General Propagation, and Desert Revegetation.

### **BOB TORREST**

480-994-3868

robertst9114@msn.com

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

## **CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY**

**PO BOX 63572**

**PHOENIX, AZ 85082-3572**

**WWW.CENTRALARIZONACACTUS.ORG**