

The Hooked Spine

Newsletter of *CoronaCactus Nursery LLC*.

Volume 2, Issue 01

Spring 2011

California Habitat

Palm Springs, CA
Spring, 2011
By: Darryl Craig

Over the past 4 years I've visited this one locale just outside the city limits of Palm Springs. It's an area of small valleys at the base of Mt. Saint Jacinto State Wilderness. (Where the Aerial Tram takes you up into) There are actually several valleys to explore and I've only scraped the surface of them. So far I've located 6 different species here: *Ferocactus cylindraceus*, *Echinocereus engelmannii* var. *armatus*, *Opuntia basilaris*, *Cylindropuntia bigelovii*, *C. echinocarpa* and one *Dudleya* species. The *Dudleya* prefer the higher elevation (above 1000ft) while the others can be found scattered around 800ft and up.

O. basilaris and *F. cylindraceus* can be found on the flat land, as well as on the steep rock cliffs. The others tend to stay away from the steep cliffs. Amazing how they can grow in the cracks with little to no substrate. This year was a good year for rain here in Southern California, we needed it! Now that spring has come around, the plants are all plumped up and growing well. The *Ferocactus* and *Chollas* are just getting into flower, while the *Opuntia* is just about done with flowers.

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The Hooked Spine

Spring Edition
March-May 2011

Vol. 2, Issue 01

GREETINGS! It's been awhile since our last issue, hasn't it! We apologize for that, but we've been extremely busy with the nursery and with life in general. Between just the 2 of us, there's never enough time in a day. We've built a second shadehouse for our growing crop of plants. Many new seedlings are now available, as with many new mature plants.

We were at the CSSA San Diego convention and our annual sale at the Lancaster Poppy Festival, April was very busy!

Our new website is 97% complete we are just awaiting the designers' final touches. We've had some ups and downs building it, but we really like how it turned out. Please send us any feedback comments you may have.

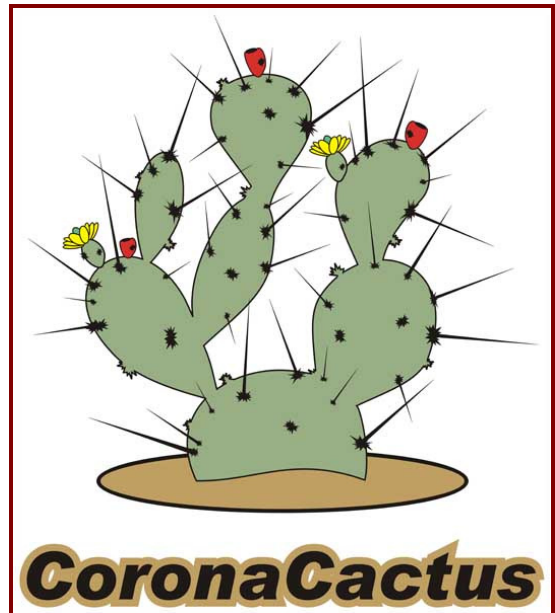
This month's featured plant has a little twist instead of just a single plant we're featuring a small habitat locale near Palm Springs, CA. There are 6 different cactus species and 1 *Dudleya* species here. ❖

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California Habitat

Palm Springs, CA
Spring, 2011
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While close to Joshua Tree National Park, there are no Ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*) to be found in this area. Drive 10-15 miles east on Interstate 10 and there all over in abundance.

In years past, these plants had suffered from lack of water and the extreme heat in the summer. Back in 2009 there was a large brush fire that wiped out a whole hillside of plants along with others near the top of the valley. Some *Ferocactus* looked perfect on one side, but their backside was burnt to a crisp. The area has since recovered, but those hillside plants will take quite a while to re-populate. Fortunately the majority of them are alive and well and reproducing plenty of seed.

Unfortunately this area is also used for amateur gun shooting. Empty bullet shells and swiss cheese wood signs are all over. However, I have yet to see one plant that has been shot at, unless it was completely demolished, but I haven't seen any evidence of malicious plant shooting.

There is so much more area to explore out here, even is this small 2-3 square mile. I hope to bring more articles and photos of new plants and habitat locales from this area again soon.

Photos can be found on the last page here. More photos are on our website in the PHOTO GALLERY section. ❖

Website Updates

If I had hair, I'd have certainly pulled it all out by now. I really did not expect building a webshop type website was so complicated. I broke down and sent it all off to real web designers. Hopefully, they are doing what they say they are, by putting on the final touches to have it ready by the end of August.

With our new website comes new plant lists! Plants and tool lists have been updated with our latest offerings.

- New photo galleries will be added:
- CoronaCactus Collection: Blooms and new growth 2011
 - California Habitat: Palm Springs, CA Spring 2011
 - *Echinomastus johnsonii* in Habitat

CactiGuide.com

CactiGuide.com is quickly becoming the authoritative website on the net for the positive identification of the Cactus Family. With the vast number of plants out there, they are always looking for photos of plants to display in the guide. Due credit will be given to the collection, the plant and the photographer.

So if you see a missing photo on the guide and you have that plant in your collection (and it's been positively identified) please contact Daiv at, daiv@cactiguide.com



CSSA Corner

July 2011

Those who live in the western US should be planning to attend the Succulent Symposium at the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens on September 3rd, 2011.

The annual meeting of the Society was held on July 2nd, 2011 at the Huntington Library. President, Laurel Woodley recapped the last year's activities which included the successful Convention in San Diego in April. It's not too early to begin planning to attend the next Convention in April 2013.

For more information, Plant Sales Lists, Cultivation Articles and more, please visit our website: www.coronacactus.com

Check us out on eBay!
CoronaCactusNursery

Our listings generally start on Tuesday and end on Sunday. We offer lower than listed starting prices to give you a chance at some really great deals!



An archive page has been created on our website for viewing past Newsletters. Current Newsletters will be available a few weeks after release.

www.coronacactus.com/newsletter.htm

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Book Review

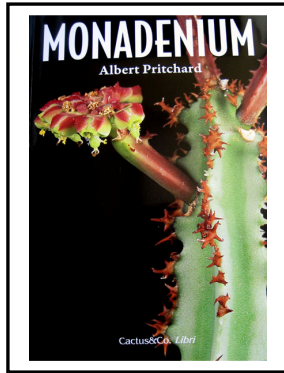
Monadenium

Author: Albert Pritchard

For over 40 years Peter Bally's monumental account of the genus *Monadenium* has held the field, but is long out of print, and many species have been described since 1961. Albert Pritchard wisely does not attempt to rival the monograph, but concentrates on providing good color photographs and illustrations and text to help growers to recognize the species and treasure them in cultivation. This is especially important as some are very local and endangered in habitat.

At the time when the taxonomic world is in turmoil as each new study of molecular genetics threatens to overthrow time-honored classifications, it is hard for any author to decide which side to back when publishing a book such as this. Albert prudently gives both sides a hearing: The familiar traditional names under *Monadenium* and the new often unfamiliar transfers under *Euphorbia*. A study of the admirable picture gallery here should enable readers to make up their own minds on just how distinctive monadeniums look to justify status as a separate genus.

Sad to tell, Albert never lived to see his *Monadenium* book in print. He died in 2009 leaving another manuscript on *Jatropha* unfinished. However, we can treasure his "Introduction to the Euphorbiaceae" published by Cactus & Co. in 2003, to which the present volume makes a worthy companion. *G.D. Rowley.*



Shadehouse #2

Actually, it's turned into a hothouse, as we've left the plastic on on year. Thanks to our great customers, our nursery is growing! Last year we built a 20 x 40' shadehouse. It was a design we came up with and has worked out great. However, this time we decided to go with a cold-frame kit, as we stumbled upon a good deal. The kit is made by Clear-Span and consists of metal piping in various shapes and sizes. All the wood shown in the build process does not come with the kit. The kit is nearly the "metal framework".

The current shadehouse was stuffed full and once again, we were in dire need of more growing space. This new kit is actually a 20 x 48' design, although to keep it consistent, we modified it to 40' to match the existing house. Infact, a lot of this kit has been modified to suit our needs.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS: SUMMER 2011

AUGUST 13-14

26TH Annual InterCity Show & Sale
Los Angeles Arboretum

SEPTEMBER 3

28TH Succulent Symposium
Huntington Botanical Gardens

Palm Springs Habitat Photos



Ferocactus cylindraceus



Ferocactus cylindraceus



Ferocactus cylindraceus



Ferocactus cylindraceus



Ferocactus cylindraceus



Ferocactus cylindraceus



Echinocereus engelmannii var. *armatus*



Opuntia basilaris



Echinocereus engelmannii var. *armatus*



Opuntia basilaris



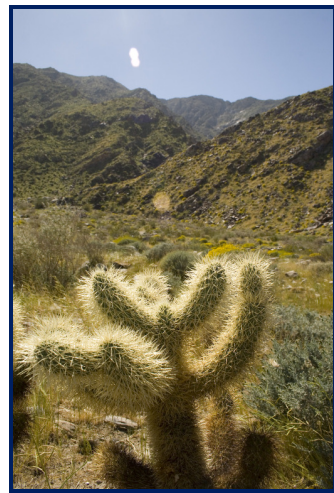
Dudleya sp. (*D. cymosa*?)



Opuntia basilaris



Cylindropuntia echinocarpa



Cylindropuntia bigelovii