

Gaultonia

Newsletter of the
Manchester Branch
of the
British Cactus and Succulent Society



Notocactus glaucinus

AUTUMN 2010

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- 1. How not to Proof Read**
- 2. A New Cactus Pest**
- 3. The Open Day (thanks to Christine for the photos)**
- 4. Our Succulent Show**

Please continue to send us your news, photos and written pieces, long or short, for publication.

Post to:

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Or E-mail photos or articles to:

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The 'Silly Season'
- A Story as Printed in a local Newspaper

This appeared in a local paper 'Somewhere in England' (name deleted to avoid embarrassment). . It can only have been read out over the phone to someone at the paper on work placement who has not bothered to check spellings!!
(Our thanks to John Foley for this)

British Cactus and Succulent Society

David Minnion, presented an illustrated talk on his experiences to the members of the [REDACTED] Branch British cactus and succulent society.

It featured his visit from El Paso to San Antonio 11-16 July 1991.

The opening sequence of colour transparencies revealed the harshness of the Chihuahuan Desert.

A long flow of colour transparencies revealed many choice specimens of Echinocereus in full bloom - purple/red, sheen pink, yellow and orange flowers with a halo of whist brown spinallo.

Many species of sclero cactus were difficult to locate due to grass lands that kept these magnificent plants well hidden from sigt.

However, patience and perserverance were well rewarded and the results were clearly shown in the colour transparencird. Juvenile and miniature plants,

A large group of Epineidndna Micromeris, Pecinate Spinach, were also included.

Many area of his cactus trail revealed natural rock gardens where many cactus plants flourished due to the shelter provided by the rocks.

"Wild life is a hazard" explained the speaker as the transparencies were shown revealing Gopher snakes (non venomous) beetles and lizards.

"Rattle snakes were more prepared for active participation poised ready to strike as their territory had been invaded.

Other discoveries included the miniature Joumeyya Parrycantha with it's delicate up right featherlike spination growing in Fairy rings underneath.

Mr Minnion said he had many supprises located in areas unknown to him.

He has made three visits to Texas but is still searching for those elusive plants in full bloom, and hoped on his fourth visit to discover the Leprechauns frock of Gold".

A New Cactus Pest

You might be familiar with mealy bugs, red spider mites, or those annoying Sciari flies but I came across Something Completely Different oozing its way across the long spines of a *Notocactus* – a slug! I'd had my suspicions after finding an *Opuntia* (the one earmarked for this month's table show) lurched over, having had a large patch of epidermis scraped off (including the glochids), and here was my Number 1 suspect.

These gastropods feed by rasping at whatever surface they find themselves on, using a tongue covered with dozens of small tooth-like structures. Sit a slug (or its close relative, the snail) on your hand for a few minutes and you can feel it setting to. No wonder they can strip the soft juicy leaves of dahlias or lettuces overnightbut glochids!

We keep our cacti outside over the summer – on an old desk on our covered patio. This gives them good conditions – fresh air and open access for pollinators, full sun but shelter from rain and these benefits seemed to outweigh the risk from garden pests. What beats us is why a slug would choose to leave behind those leafy garden plants and trek down a flight of steps, across a stone floor and climb a metal desk leg to get to the cacti. Ah, you're thinking – they probably just transferred a slug to the desk by accident, while passing with some garden debris and the poor lost creature had to settle for cacti as the only available food source, but that's not the case. There were not one, but several slug tracks across the floor, indicating that, having had a taste of the exotic, he made a return visit...possibly with pals, since they follow each other's slime tracks. That meant a job of searching all the plants and their trays and the underside of the desk until I came to the conclusion that he dined alone.

I've relocated him to tackle something useful – a mossy patch right down the garden – surely he won't find his way back from there... (Sylvia Jones)



The *Notocactus* in question

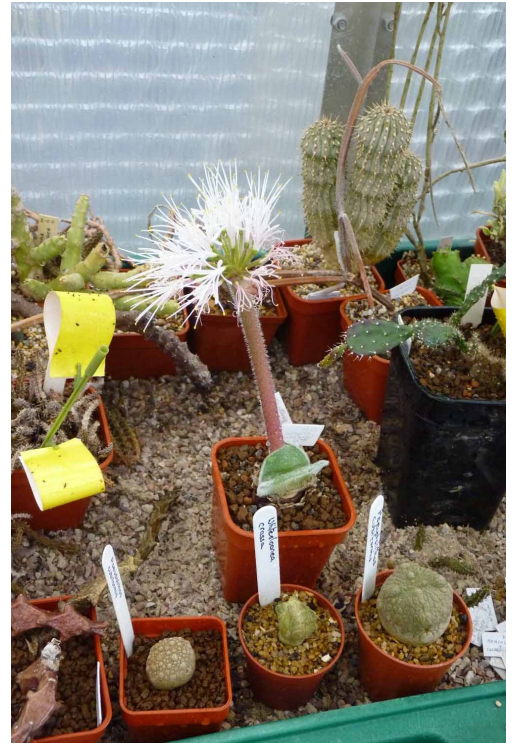


Another *Opuntia* showing slug damage

Brian's Collection



Harry's Collection



Ivor's Collection



Peter's Collection

