



British Cactus & Succulent Society **MANCHESTER BRANCH**

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2012

2012 is an exciting year for the Manchester Branch of the British Cactus and Succulent Society. As we were born in 1947 we will achieve our Old Age status this year. As a result of reaching such a milestone it has been decided to make the whole year special rather than to run a one-off special event. Consequently our programme reflects this decision. For the first time in the memory of even the long standing members we welcome an Italian gentleman, Aldo Delladdio, who will be in the country speaking at the Northern Area Weekend, to speak to the Branch in March. The talk he will be giving the members reflects his visit to the south western state of Texas and on into Mexico. We thank Dorothy Minors for alerting us to the chance for this event.. In addition to this we will be welcoming four speakers to give a talk each to the members for the first time ever. Brian McDonough is well known to those who frequent the Mesemb Show as he regularly enters this event but for this visit he will be explaining all about plant pollination and the aftermath of this task. Chris Davies has been Mammillaria hunting in Mexico on two occasions and we will hear all about his travels in August. Martin Doorbar is not the easiest of speakers to pin down to a date as he is in the States an enormous amount of time and we will find out what he does there in his spare time as he regales us about travels through five cactus States. Finally, in November, we welcome Bill Christie to tell us all about visiting Bolivia in 2001. Bill has only recently joined the speakers realm so we wish him well. Three speakers, David Porter, Colin Walker and Mike Ashworth have all been to speak at Manchester Branch once before so we are glad to be able to bring

them back for a second visit. All the other speakers are 'old faithfuls' whom it is a pleasure to have at the Branch again.

North West Cactus Mart

Saturday April 28th 2012

Doors open from 10.30am till 2.30pm

St Thomas More Church Hall

Kirkway, Alkrington, Middleton,

Manchester M24 1PP

All the usual traders will be present.

More details in a month or so.

Refreshments will be available from the start. A good choice of warm food plus tea, coffee, cake, scones etc.

Speciality: Bacon muffins

MANCHESTER BRANCH OPEN DAY

SUNDAY JUNE 17TH 2012

Collections to view: Christine Humphreys, Brian Darnell, Harry Mak and Peter Bint.

The day will begin at Christine 's collection at 12.45pm and then move on to Brian 's and Harry' s at regular intervals through the afternoon. Tea coffee, biscuits will be available at the first two venues. A sizeable buffet will be available at Peter 's house from about 5pm. Maps and final details will be available from your branch secretary nearer the time or you could contact me directly for further information: 0161 643 8932 or peter@bint.myzen.co.uk

Collection details: Christine has two greenhouses with a general collection but she does like her Mammillarias
Brian also has two greenhouses, one large the other smaller, and again has a general collection of very well grown plants. He has no genera preferences.
Harry has a superb Haworthia National Collection which fills most of the three greenhouses but he has some very interesting cacti and succulents as well.
Peter has four greenhouses which house a very wide variety of cacti and succulents. In addition he has one of the largest Lithops collections in the north west. Other mesembs are also sprouting in all vacant spaces.

North West Mesemb Show **Saturday October 13th 2012**

This has become a firm favourite with hobbyists who share a love of the mesemb varieties. This year, and henceforth, it will share the day with Manchester Branch

October meeting

Doors open at 8.30am for competitors to stage their plants and 10.30am for the public to come in to the show. Judging will commence at 11am and this will be carried out by Derek Tribble who will also deliver the talk entitled ' ' to both show visitors and Branch members at 2pm.

VENUE: ST THOMAS MORE CHURCH HALL
ADDRESS AS FOR THE CACTUS MART
REFRESHMENTS ALSO THE SAME AS THE CACTUS MART.

Many plants on sale at attractive prices.
COME AND HAVE A SPLENDID DAY OUT.

Do you know this?

Not only have the roots and body parts of *Lophophora williamsii* been used by Mexican Indians, the Aztecs, for inducing hallucinogenic trances as part of their religious rites but they were used by some native American Indians in the pre Columbian period as an anaesthetic for patients undergoing operations.

The trunks of some cacti are used to make a special type of Argentinian drum called bombo leguero.

Cactus spines can be used for sutures after first being sterilised with hot coals.

The Saguaro is the largest cactus in North America. Most roots of the saguaro are only four to six inches deep in the ground but they spread out as wide as the plant is tall. There is just one root, the tap root, which extends down into the ground for more than two feet. The holes that birds nested in, known as saguaro boots can be found in the dead remains of the plants. They were used by native Americans as water bottles prior to the invention of the water canteen.

Euphorbia trigona is known as the 'good luck cactus' by locals. This maybe because it is easy to grow or because of its green colour which signifies luck to the local peoples.

In addition to being used for wine making the flowers of the 'prickly pear' are used as a home remedy for relief from itchy insect bites and other stings and scratches. Prickly pear flowers are astringent and, like the fruits, high in vitamin C.

Hylocereus undatus is known by many names including strawberry pear, thang loy, red pitaya, pitaya roja dragon fruit and dragon pearl fruit according to where it is grown. Dragon fruit is native to Central America and according to Aztec literature was known as early as the 13th century. It is harvested for its uses in wine making, fruit juice, flavourings and its locally well trusted medicinal value. *Selenicereus megalkanthus* is known as the yellow pitaya or pitaya amarilla.