Cactus Comments

New York Cactus and Succulent Society

est 1962

January 2013

Next Meeting

Thursday, January 17th, 20123
6-7:45 pm
331 Madison Ave (near 43rd St)
7th Floor New York, NY
www.nycss.org

The Strange Cacti of Mexico and the Southwest

Please bring in your Ariocarpus, Tubinicarpus, Aztekium species. Richard Stone will lead the discussion on these strange species and others.

Guests are always welcomed!

Membership

Joining NYCSS gives you information packed monthly meetings, talks from experts and amateur enthusiasts, demonstrations, slide shows, trips, and our monthly newsletter, Cactus Comments. The 10$ annual dues covers everyone in your household, from September to June.

Mail membership checks payable to

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Contents

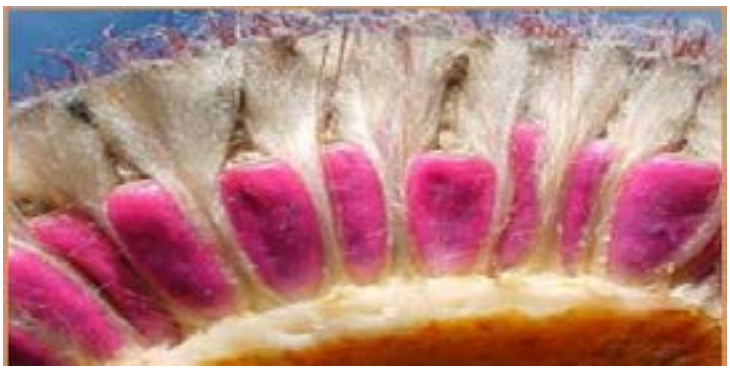
CEPHALIUM

Cephalium is a structure of wool and bristle located at the growing tip of certain varieties of cacti. The cephalium can take a number of colors, forms and shapes. Cephalium will only begin growing after a cactus has reached a certain size or age. All cephalic cacti need to reach maturity before they can start producing cephalium. Flowers and fruit are always produced from the cephalium in species bearing cephalium. In some species flower and fruit can follow very quickly once the cephalium has been produced. Other species require more time.

Melocactus species are probably the most common and popular forms of cephaliac cacti. However, there are many other types of cacti that also produce cephalium. The cephaliums varry in size and location. Many columnar species produce a lateral cephalium that starts at the top of the stem and grows down while others will only produce cephalium from the plant's apex. Cephalium evolved several times in the family, in many independent groups both in North America and in South America.

With a few exceptions, each areole of all cacti only produce a single flower. After this flower is produced, the areole becomes inactive. Exceptions to this rule are Myrtillocactus in North America, which can produce several flowers per areole. In order for a cactus to produce more flowers, the cactus has to grow more areoles.To grow more areoles the cactus has to grow it's stem. The growth of new stems can be a very costly effort, demanding lots of energy and nutrients for desert plants. Cacti that develop a cephalium save energy while maximizing reproduction potential. In cacti with cephalia, the reproductive parts of the stem are composed of very closely spaced areoles, allowing many flowers to be produced with a minimal amount of energy spent with the growth of its stem.

The cephalium also has another great advantage, protection of the flowers and fruits while they are still developing. The areoles of the cephalium usually produce copious amounts of bristles and wool which protect the young flower buds until they are ready to open, as well as the young fruits until they are ripe. The flower buds and young fruits are hidden within the cephalium, enveloped by the bristles and wool, and not visible until they are mature enough to appear in the surface of the cephalium



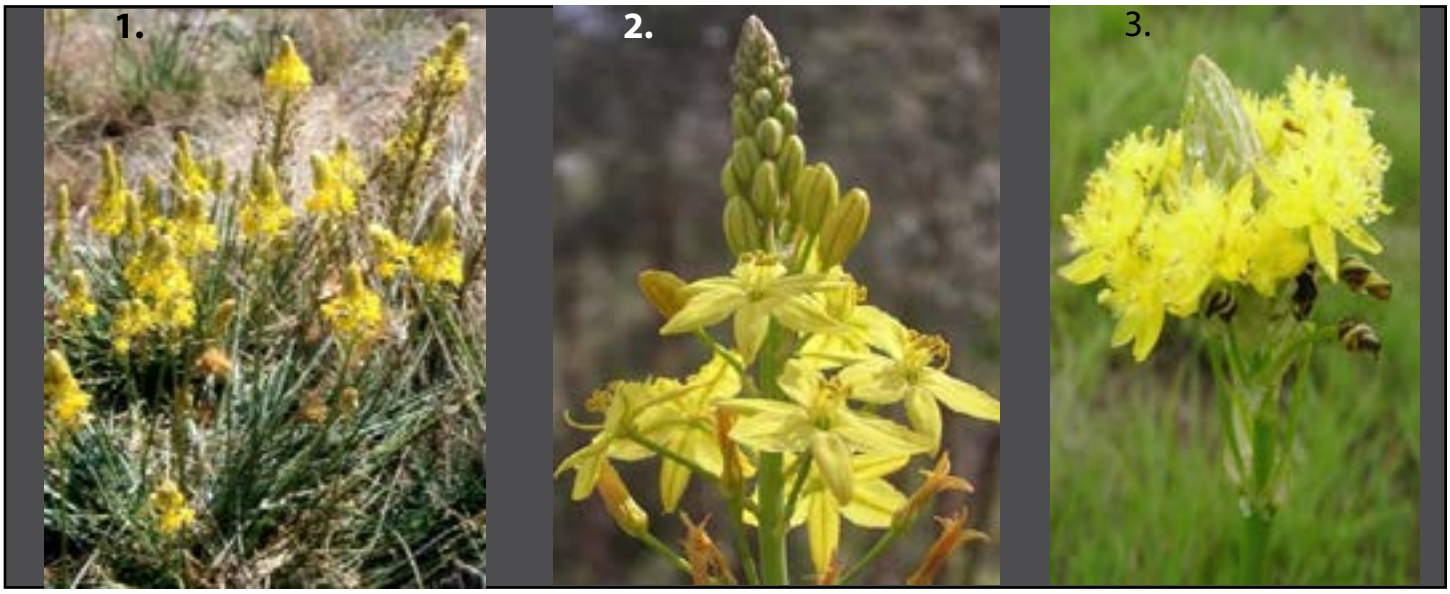
GENUS SPOTLIGHT: BULBINE

Bulbine is a genus of plants in the family Xanthorrhoeaceae, subfamily Asphodeloideae, consisting of approximately 160 species. The genus is named for the bulb-shaped tuber shown by many of the species. Bulbine is found chiefly in Southern Africa, with few species extending into tropical Africa and a few species in Australia.

Bulbine generally has yellow flowers borne in lax or compound racemes, Sometimes flowers appear in white, orange or pink as well but all flowers posess bearded, hairy stamens. The most common species in the horticultural trade is B. frutescens. Species of Bulbine resemble Haworthia and Aloe in appearance, but with soft fleshy leaves, many with tuberous roots or a caudex. The various species grow as shrubs, rough tough weedy perennials, dwarf geophytes, and soft annuals. Many of the dwarf species have small, dome-shaped tubers, all are considered succulent.

Dormancy starts in late spring and lasts until mid autumn, but can vary between species and in different conditions. Leaves die and drop and the roots contract into the caudex leaving no visible sign of life on the surface. Propagation is mostly by seed although cuttings are possible as some species will form multiple heads or offsets.

Bulbines contain glycoproteins, similar to many aloe species and are touted for similar healing properties as *Aloe vera*, such as to ease burns, rashes and itches.



Bulbine Photos Continued

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***Bulbine abyssinica* (1)** grows in rocky grassland and on stony flats and slopes from the western Karoo, South Africa to tropical Africa. Growing from 40 to 80 cm., it has linear succulent leaves in a basal rosette with broad membranous margins at the base, a simple or branched rootstock, and a densely crowded raceme of short lasting yellow flowers.

***Bulbine bulbosa* (2)** is a species from Australia that is a dwarf perennial with a rootstock that is bulb-like with a tuber below. It has linear succulent leaves that are poisonous to stock and yellow flowers. It grows in forested areas, in sub-alpine regions, and exposed coastal locations. In cultivation it grows well in a container in dappled shade to full sun.

***Bulbine narcissifolia* (3)** grows singly or in colonies on poor soils in grassland in southern Africa from the eastern regions of the Western Cape, through the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Lesotho, north to Ethiopia. It has gray green strap shaped, sometimes twisted, semi succulent leaves, a dense spike-like inflorescence of yellow flowers in spring and summer, and a rhizomatous base.

***Bulbine frutescens* (4)** is a succulent groundcover from southern coast of South Africa up to Mozambique. It has fleshy light gray-green leaves that are 6-8 inches long, which form an open rosette of leaves to 1-2 feet tall and spreading by rhizomes to create wide-spreading clumps. Yellow flowers with frilly yellow stamens on long stalks rise above the foliage in the spring through the summer. Plant in full sun to light shade with little water. Hardy to about 20-25 degrees F.

(5) This *Bulbine frutescens* cultivar, 'Hallmark' was reportedly selected by Crassula expert Gordon Rowley from seedling plants from seed collected by Harry Hall in Johannesburg, South Africa. Harry Hall (1906-1986), was a Kirstenbosch horticulturist in charge of succulent plants who discovered many South African plants. He is particularly noted for his exploration and discovery within the genus Euphorbia and his name is commemorated in the specific epithets of many succulent plant names. He was awarded a Fellow of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) in 1981. *B.* 'Hallmark' has orange flowers rather than the typical yellow produced in the species.

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS FOR THE NEWSLETTER OR SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS, ETC.

Comments, stories or information for our newsletter can be submitted to webmaster@nycss.org

NYCSS
www.nycss.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW YORK REPTILE EXPO
Sunday, January 6, 2013
10:00am- 4:00pm
Westchester County Center
White Plains, NY
Admission: $10
http://reptileexpo.com/index.html

LONG ISLAND REPTILE EXPO
Sunday, March 17, 2013
9AM to 3PM
Huntington Hilton Hotel
598 Broad Hollow Rd. (Rt. 110)
Melville, NY 11747
$9/Adults
http://reptileexpo.com/index.html

17TH ANNUAL PLANT-O-RAMA
Horticultural Trade Show and Symposium
Tuesday, January 29, 2013
Brooklyn Botanic Garden; 9am - 4pm

Featured Speakers:

Darrel Morrison - DESIGNING FOR PLACE: Merging Art and Ecology in Regional Landscapes
Fomer Dean of School of Environmental Design at University of Georgia and former longtime advocate of the use of native vegetation in landscape design & restoration. Darrel currently lives and works in NYC and teaches at Columbia University.

Roy Diblik - PLANT COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTHY GARDENS.
Plant expert and designer, Northwind Perennial Farm, Burlington, WI, specializing in hardy field-grown perennials, natives & grasses. Roy has worked with Piet Oudolf at The High Line and Chicago's Millennium Park, among other urban plantings.

Tickets available at
http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/301240

CONNECTICUT CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
30th Annual Show & Sale 2013
Saturday, April 6 -10 AM to 5 PM
Sunday, April 7 -10AM to 4 PM
Naugatuck Valley Community College
50 Chase Parkway
Waterbury, CT (exit 18 off I-84)
http://www.ctcactusclub.com/show-sale2013.aspx

THE FLOWER SHOW
March 2 – March 10, 2013
Pennsylvania Convention Center
12th & Arch Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19107-2299
General Admission - $27
http://www.theflowershow.com/

CT FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW 2013
32ND ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW
Feb 21st-24th 2013
Connecticut Convention Center
100 Columbus Boulevard
Hartford, CT 06103
Adults: $16.00
http://www.ctflowershow.com/

SPRINGFEST GARDEN SHOW
March 14-17th 2013
Springfest Garden Show is held each year at the Sussex County Fairgrounds
37 Plains Rd., Augusta, NJ 07822
http://www.njstatefair.org/images/image/2013_coupon.jpg

11TH ANNUAL NEW JERSEY FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW
Feb 14 - 17, 2013
New Jersey Convention Center
Edison, NJ
Admission:$10
http://macevents.com/show.cfm/eventID/121