



Colorado
Cactus &
Succulent
Society

YOUR 2024 EDITOR:
SCOTT BURKHOLDER

MONTHLY PLANT SHOW

Pedro is setting up shows for next year, so start preparing your prize-winners!

*It's a brief
newsletter this
month, but
the meeting
featuring Woody
will certainly
be worth it!*

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The Colorado Cactus & Succulent Society promotes education, enjoyment, cultivation, and conservation of cacti and other succulents among our members and the larger community.



Lobivia species
Woody Minnich Photo

UPCOMING MEETING

Date: Tuesday, Nov 12th, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Denver Botanic Gardens - Gates Hall

Presentation: Cacti & Succulents of the
Bolivian Highlands

Presenter: Woody Minnich

Details:

Woody Minnich will share photos and stories from his trips to Bolivia!

Woody is also bringing flats of plants, so please bring some cash AND be prepared to take home a few new friends.

Cacti & Succulents of the Bolivian Highlands

Bolivia, an island in the western regions of South America, is south of Peru and north of Argentina-Chile and west of Brazil. Being squeezed by past wars with its neighbors, Bolivia is now a small country with no direct connection to the Pacific Ocean. It is mostly made-up of high Andean mountain environments often divided by deep river gorge valleys. From sea level to altitudes in excess of 24,000feet, it is well known for its Inca ancestry, high altitude terrace farming and the beautiful llamas, alpacas and vicunas. Due to it being mostly high in elevation, many of the cacti and other succulents are endemic to very specialized and uniquely created habitats.

When flying into La Paz, the capitol of Bolivia, one soon becomes aware of their first immediate adjustment. As soon as you step off of the airplane, you really feel the altitude of near 14,000 ft. Normally, a few days of acclimation are necessary, thus what better way to see this historically beautiful city, than to just meander verrry slooowly from street to street! The people and their culture are pronounced, and the colors and vibrancy of their life style is inspirational. One would think, at this mountainous altitude, the winter temperatures would get very cold and thus prohibit the growth of most succulent plants. Surprisingly, there are numerous cacti and other succulents found growing everywhere. And, if the altitude makes you feels ill, there are always vendors along the cobblestone streets anxious to sell their famed cocoa leaves. Just chew some, dribble the juice down your chin, and soon you'll feel as if you're back at sea level.

From La Paz into Bolivia's more remote regions, one quickly begins to view fantastic scenery from snow covered peaks to deep valleys and sculptured geological formations. Soon the Puyas and columnar Cereus become the dominate vegetation. If curvy winding roads with sheer drop-offs are not to your liking, this may not be the best place for you. Pretty soon, many smaller cryptic genera become visible from the window of your Land Cruiser. You totally forget about the rough roads and immediately get excited by more and more species appearing with each and every bend in the road. Sulcorebutias, Rebutias and Weingartias are the most dominant genera, and when they are in flower, they seem to glow with their big electric red, yellow and burgundy flowers. The Echinopsis, Lobivias, Oreocereus and Cleistocactus are also very common and are often found growing in association with numerous Bromeliads and the occasional Echeveria.

Everyday in Bolivia is like riding a rollercoaster, from sea level to 20,000ft, and from one species of cactus to another. In some areas, the cacti dominate the landscape, and in others, the cacti are as cryptic and camouflaged as chameleons. Hopefully sharing my travels in Bolivia from Lake Titicaca to Sucre, will be as exciting for you as it was for me. For those of you who may never make such a trip, perhaps this presentation can take you to Bolivia without ever leaving home.



Oreocereus trollii
Woody Minnich Photo

Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich

Woody, as he is commonly known, grew up in the Mojave Desert and has had an attraction to desert plants and animals since the early 1950's. He has been involved with the cactus and succulent world for over 52 years, as a grower, field explorer, club and organization leader, writer, photographer, lecturer and presenter.

Having been a speaker all over the world, Woody is most often associated with giving presentations on his field work from the wild places he has traveled. This talk will be featuring his encounters with many beautiful flowering cacti and other succulents, as well as his observations of their growing conditions and pollinators.

He has published numerous articles and his photography is featured in many books including; "The Copiapoa" by Schulz, "The Mammillaria Handbook" by Pilbeam, "The Cactus Lexicon" By Hunt and Charles, as well as many others. As of November 2017, he is featured as the primary photographer in the sold-out book "The Xerophile." This book specializes in what the authors call, The Obsessed Field workers from around the world.

Woody and his wife, Kathy, live in Cedar Grove, New Mexico. He is a retired secondary school teacher of 32 years where he taught Graphic Arts, Art and Architecture. In the cactus and succulent hobby, Woody is recognized for his high energy and his innovative spirit. He was the creator of the well-known, biggest show in the world, the Inter City Show. As an educator, and as with his numerous contributions and guidance, he has become an important part of the hobby, and thus is an honorary life member of thirteen C&S societies. Woody has also served on the National board as their conservation chair, convention emcee and speaker coordinator, and concept creator of the on-line version of the "To the Point". He has also been very active in many leadership positions with numerous other C & S societies and he is currently the president and a cofounder of the Santa Fe Cactus and Succulent Club.

With 52 years in the hobby and 55 years in the field (old fart), he has many experiences to share and thousands of photos to show. If you're like Woody, put on your glasses and turn up your hearing aids, and we'll all have some fun. This hobby is all about the people, and the plants bring us all together.



Crossing Lake Titicaca, Bolivia
Woody Minnich Photo

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS:

December - Year-End Potluck and Member's Photo Slideshow

April 26th & 27th, 2025 - Ironclad Date for Next Year's Show and Sale

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