



# Berkhamsted and District Branch

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Berkhamsted and District Branch

Volume 5, Issue 1

March 2013

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## Programme

### May 2013 to August 2013

- 11 May Alan Phipps  
*Smoke, Scenery, Spines  
and Flowers*
- 01 Jun Zone 6 Show  
Broughton Astley, Leicester
- 08 Jun David Minnion  
*Texas 3 (Marathon to Wes-  
laco)*
- 01 Jul Zone Open Day  
Cambridge Branch
- 13 Jul Eddy Harris  
*South Africa again via Tuc-  
son (part 2)*
- 10 Aug Branch Mini Show  
Judge Barry Tibbets

## Zone 6 Convention 2013

### Speakers

Jakub Jilemicky

And

Peter Berresford

Trade: Toobees, David  
Neville, Keith Larkin

Tickets £15

## *British Cactus and Succulent Society*

### Editor's Comments

Welcome to the March 2013 Branch newsletter. Spring is just around the corner, in theory. The late autumn and winter months seem to have continued the cloudy and dull theme we saw for much of last year. Once again we suffered from some heavy snow showers in January and February, with the snow remaining on the ground for quite some time.

The Christmas meeting stretched our minds with a couple of testing quizzes. Thereafter we started the New Year with the AGM. My thanks to those people who brought pictures to entertain us. February drew us to Southern Namibia, ably guided by our Branch Chairman, Rodney Sims. In March Paul Klaassen made a welcome return to the branch when he talked about Patagonia, *Discocactus* and *Uebelmannia*.

My thanks to Julian for his article on *Pelecypora valdeziana*. If anyone is willing to provide an article for inclusion in the newsletter it will be gratefully received.

Once again our Branch Mini-Show will be held in August and this year will

be judged by Barry Tibbets, who will also lead a discussion about the plants after the judging.

Attendance at the AGM was the lowest in recent years but we made up for it at the February meeting. We also had good numbers at the talk by Paul Klaassen.

The all encompassing event for the Branch in 2013 is the hosting of the Zone 6 Convention in April, see page 2 for more details.

David

Hon. Secretary



## Zone 6 Convention 2013

The branch is hosting the annual Zone 6 Convention this year, after a year long planning effort. The event takes place at the Wilstone Village Hall, Wilstone, near Tring, Hertfordshire on Saturday 20 April. Doors open for delegates at 10am, although we will have to be there from 9am onwards to set up the venue and to prepare the food.

We have been extremely fortunate to be able to bring [Jakub Jilemicky](#), a Czech Republic speaker, over to the UK to give two talks: the first on 'The Western Cape: Haworthias and Other Succulents' and the second on 'Succulents of the Eastern Cape'.

At the same time, [Peter Berresford](#) has kindly agreed to talk on 'Texas/New Mexico: from the Plains to the Mountains', a brand new presentation.

Jakob and Peter are excellent speakers and should provide many new insights into our favourite plants and their habitats.

Succulent plant sales will be provided by [Toobees](#) (Bob Potter) and David Neville will have cacti for sale. In addition, books will be available for purchase from Keith Larkin ([Keith's Plant Books](#)).

Further information may be found at the Zone 6 website at <http://www.zone6.bcsc.org.uk> .

Conventions are a great way to meet up with old friends and to make new ones. They are also useful for building up contacts and for networking.

**There will be a number of tasks that need to be undertaken on the day so any offers of help would be greatly appreciated.**

**In addition, if you are able to donate any food for the event (including cakes etc.), please let Gill or I know by Wednesday 3 April, if possible.**

### May 2013 Meeting

The May Branch meeting speaker will be Alan Phipps, who spoke at the Branch several years ago. Alan will be entertaining the Branch with his talk entitled 'Smoke, scenery, spines and flowers'. He will also be speaking at the Harrow meeting the previous night about 'Navajo Country'.

### June 2013 Meeting

David Minnion, an old friend, returns in June when he will be taking us to 'Texas 3 (Marathon to Weslaco)'. David is a well known and respected speaker with many years experience of growing plants.

### July 2013 Meeting

Another old friend will be back with us in July, when Eddy Harris will take us to 'South Africa again via Tucson'. This is the second part of three related talks. Eddy should need no introduction to members having spoken to the Branch on several occasions. He is also the National Society Secretary.

### August 2013 Meeting

The August meeting will be the Branch Mini-Show. This year the judge will be Barry Tibbetts (Northampton and Milton Keynes Branch), who will also talk about the plants after the judging.

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## My favourite plants #3 - *Pelecypora valdeziana*

By Julian Cooke

As I write this there is deep snow outside yet already the plant I am featuring is in bud. You have probably already guessed that the plant I am talking about is *Pelecypora valdeziana*. Now it is regarded as a *Turbinicarpus* and comes from Nuevo Leon, Coahuila in Mexico.

There is no excuse for not having at least one in any collection as it will never out-grow a 6cm pot so finding space is never an issue. The plant itself is finger thick and up to about 2 cms high. Each areole is adorned with a large number of very short almost hair like white spines that together mostly obscure the body. Underneath there is a fleshy root. Buds are often visible in the crown at Christmas

and it usually flowers in March heralding the start of the growing season for me.

Cultivation is relatively easy although I always add just



Photo Julian Cooke

that little extra grit and go easy on the water if it is very dull. The plant is easily grown from seed. The seeds are relatively large and brown/black and germinate very readily. With a push it will flower in 2 years although 3 is more likely. Flowers are large for the

size of the plant being about 1.5 cms across. The colour ranges from pale purple through pink often with a darker mid stripe on the petals through to white

(the so called albiflora). If you don't fancy growing from seed, the plant is widely available from many cactus suppliers, which is good as it is probably not the longest lived plant. 10-15 years is probably its limit but if you

have two then you can easily set your own seed. Indeed if you do have several why not grow them in a pan.

The plant featured is in a 5 cm pot and is about 8 years old.

### More dates for your diary

13 April 2013	National Society AGM, Leicester
20 April 2013	Zone 6 Convention—Wilstone Village Hall, near Tring HP23 4PE
25 May 2013	Luton Branch annual show, Pirton Village Hall
01 June 2013	Zone 6 Show—Astley Village Hall, Station Road, Broughton Astley, Leicester LE9 6PT
22 June 2013	Harrow Branch annual show, Grimsdyke Road, Hatch End, Middlesex HA4 4PH
07 July 2013	Zone 6 Open Day, Cambridge Branch
10 August 2013	Berkhamsted branch mini-show



**British Cactus & Succulent Society**

# **ZONE 6 SHOW**

**Saturday 1st June 2013**

**From 11.00am to 4.30pm**



Agave utahensis

**Broughton Astley Village Hall  
Station Road Broughton Astley Leicester  
LE9 6PT**

**Judged by David Slade**

**Show Secretary Tony Morris 01455 614410**

**Plant Sales - Tony Irons and Toobees**

**Book Sales - Keith Larkin**

**Raffle**

**Admission £1 (Exhibitors entering 5 or more classes and  
children under 16 will be admitted free)**

**Refreshments will be available**