



British Cactus & Succulent Society

Charity No. 290786 – a charity registered in England and Wales

Patrons: Anne Swithinbank & Tom Hart Dyke

CACTI & SUCCULENTS IN THE UK

A DIRECTORY OF PUBLIC COLLECTIONS



FOREWORD

This directory is a guide to botanical gardens and other publically accessible venues in the UK with collections of cacti and other succulents. If you don't know much about cacti and succulents you can find more information about these fascinating plants and the British Cactus & Succulent Society at the back.

The collections featured in this directory are very variable in size and while a local member gives their honest view on each of them, the society makes no particular recommendations.

The best time to visit is usually between April and September, the growing season for most plants, but there will be other things to see in the gardens the rest of the year so unless you are specifically going for the cacti and succulent don't be put off by the time of year. To avoid any confusion, opening times and entry fees have not been included; for the most up-to-date information please visit the gardens' websites. Please note that postcodes are given for convenience but may not be relied upon for satnavs.

A number of collections are maintained with the help of local BCSS branches whose members provide their expert knowledge and time, and sometimes plants.

This directory has been compiled with the help of curators and officials at the various gardens, as well as BCSS members, to whom I am very grateful. All photographs are used with permission of the credited photographers.

This directory may be freely disseminated but permission to use photographs should be obtained via the email address below.

Alan Bromley

Marketing Officer

marketing@bccs.org.uk

CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE TO THIS DIRECTORY?

Suggestions for new gardens, or updates to the ones already included, are welcome. Belfast will be added in a later addition and there are some gardens yet to provide information about their collections. If you would like to contribute your views any of the gardens featured (a few "member's views" are missing) please do get in touch.

MAP OF UK BOTANICAL GARDENS



INDEX

ENGLAND (by county)

Cambridgeshire	Cambridge University Botanic Garden	4
Cheshire	Chester Zoo	5
Cornwall	Eden Project	6
Co Durham	Durham University Botanic Garden	7
Devon	Bicton Park Botanical Gardens, Budleigh Salterton	8
	Connaught Gardens, Sidmouth	9
	Paignton Zoo	10
Essex	Capel Manor College	11
Isle of Wight	Ventnor Botanical Garden	12
Kent	World Garden at Lullingstone Castle	13
Leicestershire	Leicester University Botanic Garden	14
Oxfordshire	University of Oxford Botanic Garden	15
South Yorkshire	Sheffield Botanical Gardens	16
Surrey	Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew	17
	Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley	18
West Midlands	Birmingham Botanical Gardens	19
	Winterbourne House & Garden	20
West Yorkshire	Cliffe Castle Garden, Keighley	21

SCOTLAND (by city)

Aberdeen	Duthie Park	22
Dundee	University of Dundee Botanic Garden	23
Edinburgh	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	24
Glasgow	Glasgow Botanical Gardens	27
Inverness	Inverness Botanical Gardens	26
St Andrews	St Andrews University Botanic Garden	27

WALES

Bangor	Treborth Botanic Garden	28
---------------	-------------------------	----

Is it a cactus, is it a succulent?	29
The BCSS & BCSS Branches	30
Follow us on Social Media	31
History of the BCSS	Back cover

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDEN

1 Brookside, Cambridge CB2 1JE

t 01223 336 265

www.botanic.cam.ac.uk/Botanic/Home.aspx



Photograph courtesy of Howard Rice (www.howardrice.co.uk)

The Collection

Cambridge Botanic is a heritage-listed, 40-acre garden, which holds an amazing nine National Plant Collections. It is planted with year-round interest and seasonal inspiration in mind, and features plants from all over the world. The glasshouses host a number of different environments, including Mountains, Tropical Wetlands, Tropical Rainforest, Oceanic Islands and Arid Lands.

Recently re-landscaped, the Arid Lands greenhouse contains African plants on one side and New World plants from the Americas on the other. There is a strong educational focus to the display which is intended to show the variety of mechanisms to cope with lack of fresh water, comparing the succulent plants with others that live alongside them, such as *Fouquieria splendens* (often grown by BCSS members but is not especially succulent). The display highlights convergent evolution; that is, the phenomenon whereby completely unrelated plants from Africa and the Americas have evolved to look rather similar.

Overall the cactus and succulent collection is not particularly large or specialist. There are some large aloes and agaves and a number of ceroid (columnar) cacti, mostly in open beds with other genera, including *Opuntia*, *Ferocactus* and *Mammillaria*. There is a very good outdoor display as well, with hardy succulents and a few cacti.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Cambridge: <http://www.viridis.net/cactus/cambcss.html>

Meetings are held in Great Shelford. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

CHESTER ZOO

Moston Road, Upton-by-Chester CH2 1EU

t 01244 380 280

www.sbg.org.uk



Photograph courtesy of Chester Zoo

The Collection

The Zoo has a collection of over 1,500 cacti maintained by their lead horticulturist, Jo Adderley (a BCSS member).

The arid display is inside one of two greenhouses open to the visiting public. The first section is a tropical house which, as well as demonstrating the uses of some fascinating world plants has a display of *Nepenthes*, one of the five National Plant Collections held at Chester Zoo. (The Zoo currently houses the largest collection of *Nepenthes* in the UK and a rare collection of Pleurothallidinae orchids.) You pass through a newly constructed corridor and enter into the arid house.

The extensive collection is largely bench grown and what's more it hosts the National Collections of three cactus genera: *Copiapoa*, *Matucana* and *Turbinicarpus*. The public display has been split geographically and comprises a selection of Mexican cacti and succulents, plants endemic to Madagascar and the African continent, and a bed in the shape of South America with cacti from each region in location. Other cacti held are *Mammillaria*, *Melocactus*, *Gymnocalycium* and *Ariocarpus*, along with many other genera. A number of succulents are also on show, including *Gasteria*, *Haworthia*, and some interesting *Euphorbia* and stapeliad species.

The entire collection can be seen from the public area but if you would like to get a closer look it is recommended that you contact Jo directly to arrange a visit. Email: j.adderley@chesterzoo.org

Nearest BCSS Branch

Chester & North Wales: www.chester.bcss.org.uk/BCSSChester/Home.html

Meetings are held at Ness Botanic Gardens. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

If you are interested in nature, as well as cacti and succulents, this is a definite must-see destination. There is so much to see that you need to plan the whole day at the zoo, not forgetting to visit the cacti and succulents of course!

EDEN PROJECT

Bodelva, Cornwall PL24 2SG

t 01726 811 911

www.edenproject.com



All photographs courtesy of the Eden Project

The Collection

Opened fully in 2001, the Eden Project is a major tourist attraction in the West Country. The primary focus is on the environment and the interdependence of plants and people, and it is world famous for its diverse collection of plants set within two large biomes reflecting rainforest and Mediterranean environments.

The Mediterranean Biome covers 0.654 hectares (1.6 acres) and measures 35m (115ft) high, 65m (213ft) wide, and 135m (443ft) long. It houses familiar warm temperate and arid plants, such as olives and grape vines, and various sculptures. There is also a modest collection of cacti and succulents, mostly species familiar to BCSS members.

Cacti include *Carnegiea gigantea*, several ferocacti and a couple of *Pachycereus* species. Succulents are mostly the larger rosette shrub types such as agaves, yuccas and aloes, along with members of the Crassulaceae, including aeoniums, echeverias and kalanchoes.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Cornwall: www.cornwall.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Redruth. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme

A Member's View

The Eden Project is not a botanical garden in the usual sense and while it does not hold an important collection of cacti and succulents it is worthy of a visit in its own right. There is plenty to see and do, particularly if you have children in tow because the focus is very much on education.

DURHAM UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDEN

Hollingside Lane, South Road, Durham City DH1 3TN

t 0191 33 45522

www.dur.ac.uk/botanic.garden



Photograph by Mike Hughes, Head Gardener

The Collection

A 10-hectare (25-acre) university Botanic Garden set amongst beautiful mature woodlands on the southern outskirts of Durham city. It provides an academic resource to the university for teaching and research, and educational visits to schools. It is also open to the public. The small greenhouse has a tropical section, a giant waterlily section and a section dedicated to a display of well-labelled cacti and succulents. It's a general collection of plants from the arid zones around the world.

Cactus genera include: *Astrophytum*, *Cereus*, *Cleistocactus*, *Copiapoa*, *Echinocactus*, *Echinopsis*, *Eulychnia*, *Ferocactus*, *Mammillaria*, *Neoporteria*, *Opuntia*, *Oreocereus*, *Parodia*, *Pereskia*, *Stenocereus*, and *Uebelmannia*.

Succulent genera include *Adromischus*, *Agave*, *Alluaudia*, *Aloe*, *Ceropegia*, *Crassula*, *Cyphostemma*, *Dudleya*, *Echeveria*, *Euphorbia*, *Gasteria*, *Haworthia*, *Kalanchoe*, *Kedrostis*, *Nolina*, *Pachypodium*, and *Senecio*. There are also bromeliads *Abromeitiella* and *Hechtia*, and the geophytic bulb *Ledebouria*.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Teesside: www.teesside.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Stockton-on-Tees. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

The branch has given much advice and guidance over the years and has donated plants to the collection. It also holds a sale of cacti at the garden each year.

A Member's View

An excellent collection worthy of a visit. It's not large but has a good selection and is well-displayed, and despite the usual problems caused by children in the vicinity of spiny plants and top-dressing gravel, it has survived quite well! The gardens are very nice (especially in the cherry blossom season) and it is worthy of a visit as part of a broader botanical day out.

BICTON PARK BOTANICAL GARDENS

East Budleigh, Budleigh Salterton, Exeter, Devon EX9 7BJ

t 01395 568465

www.bictongardens.co.uk



Photographs by Eleanor Hurlock

The Collection

This garden hosts a modest collection of cacti and succulents, including euphorbias and agaves, in a small arid house. The plants are labelled and there are interpretation panels on display.

A giant *Opuntia* that previously dominated the far end of the greenhouse to roof height has been well and truly reduced, and Kew Gardens has provided some new cacti. The new curator is looking to improve the collection and to make sure everything is accurately labelled. There is a large specimen of *Carnegiea gigantea* (saguaro) which has flowered, something that is unusual in the UK.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Exeter: www.exeter.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Woodbury. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

Although the collection is small there is plenty to see in the other glasshouses and in the rest of the extensive gardens to make a visit well worthwhile. Some of the glasshouses have plants that are extinct in the wild, and other plants which are only grown by a very small number of botanical gardens.

CONNAUGHT GARDENS SIDMOUTH

Peak Hill Road, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 8RZ

t 01395 517528

<http://tinyurl.com/connaughtgardens>



Top left and right photographs by Eleanor Hurlock; bottom left by Carl Beckett

The Collection

Connaught Gardens is a cliff top garden to the west of the seafront in Sidmouth. The gardens have achieved a green flag award and are the jewel of the park areas in the town. The gardens are on the site of Seaview House, demolished in 1932 as it had fallen into disrepair. Where the cactus house now sits had previously been used for growing soft fruit. The greenhouse was converted to a cactus house 25 years ago, with sliding glass panels installed to protect the public from the spines. There are a number of species of *Ferocactus*, *Gymnocalycium*, *Echinocereus* and *Parodia* and while the collection is not extensive there are some large specimens.

There are extensive bedding schemes to admire as you walk through the different parts of the gardens, and there is a café where you can enjoy coffee and cake with a sea view.

The gardens are used extensively for a range of activities including music, theatre and art exhibitions. During most weeks throughout the summer there is at least one band performing. A notice board by the steps from Manor Road lists all events.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Exeter: www.exeter.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Woodbury. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

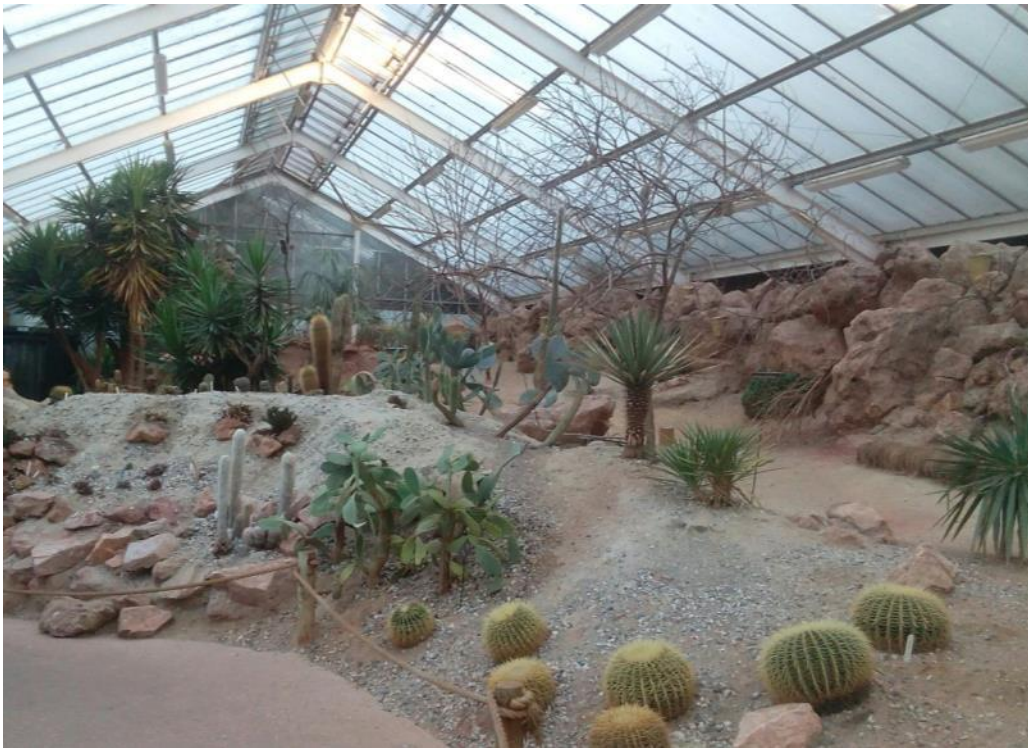
A small collection worthy of a visit if you are in Sidmouth. The gardens are an important attraction in the town.

PAIGNTON ZOO

Totnes Road, Paignton TQ4 7EU

t 01803 697500

www.paigntonzoo.org.uk/explore/gardens



Photograph courtesy of Paignton Zoo

The Collection

Paignton Zoo is a joint botanical and zoological gardens that is home to a large number of animal and plant species from around the world. The collection includes two tropical glasshouses and a large number of tender species that thrive in the warm Devon climate.

Arid species are currently displayed in the Desert House, which is a large unheated glasshouse that is also a free-flying bird exhibit. Unfortunately, the birds sometime take a liking to the plants! The plant collection within the Desert House is undergoing a long-term change to an Australian theme.

Current cactus genera include: *Echinocactus*, *Cleistocactus*, *Oreocereus*, *Opuntia*, *Selenicereus*, and *Trichocereus*. Succulent genera include: *Agave*, *Aloe*, *Beaucarnea*, *Dasyliion*, *Euphorbia*, *Furcraea*, *Gasteria*, and *Yucca*.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Exeter: www.exeter.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Woodbury. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

Worth a visit is you are planning a trip to the zoo itself but not just for the cacti and succulents.

CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE

Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield EN1 4RQ

t 01803 697500

www.capelmanorgardens.co.uk



Photograph by Roger Day

The Collection

Capel Manor is a horticultural college set in a 30-acre estate that was first established way back in the 13th century. The gardens are extensive and include many different themes, a number of which are award-winning as you might expect give the college's sphere of teaching.

The Display House includes a collection of cacti and succulents which was set up in about 2010 with the help of members from the local BCSS branch who worked with students to transform an overgrown greenhouse into a desert display area. This meant breaking through the concrete base of the greenhouse to get more depth, and adding five tons of new soil with three different mixes for the various plant types.

Many of the cacti were donated by BCSS members, particularly mature specimens which could no longer be housed in private collections. The original planting area has been extended and a range of predominantly African succulents added. In addition, part of the greenhouse is now devoted to Australian arid plants.

The gardens are open to the public every day during the summer (weekdays only from November to February, but please check the website) and the greenhouse is well worth a visit.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Lea Valley: www.leavalley.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Room D7 at Capel Manor College. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

This is a modest but well-presented collection of cacti and succulents, and the gardens themselves are worthy of a special visit, not least because as a horticultural college some of the displays are truly wonderful.

VENTNOR BOTANICAL GARDENS

Undercliff Drive, Ventnor, Isle of Wight PO38 1UL

t 01983 855397

www.botanic.co.uk



All photographs courtesy of Chris Kidd, curator

The Collection

Nestled in the microclimate of the Undercliffe, Ventnor Botanic Garden has an extensive collection of cacti and xerophytes in an Arid Garden area. What makes it unusual is the fact that they are all grown outdoors – there is no greenhouse collection at this garden. This began as an experiment some fifteen ago and has seen their collection grow to encompass, for example, 27 species of *Opuntia*.

Ventnor Botanic Gardens houses the National Collection of *Puya*, the high Andean xerophytes in the bromeliad family which, although not officially a succulent in the BCSS world, are often featured in presentations by cactus explorers. The gardens have some very notable aloes, including *A. polyphylla* and *A. mutabilis*, which flower regularly every year. There is also a large collection of shrubby mesembs, such as *Drosanthemum* and *Lampranthus*.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Isle of Wight: www.iow.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Wooton. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

Growing cacti and succulents outdoors in the UK, even in the relatively mild climate of the Isle of Wight, is always going to be a challenge so don't expect perfect specimens all year round. This is not a garden to visit specially for the cacti and succulents but there is much more to see than that.

The gardens are well-kept, thanks in large part by a team of volunteers, but it is now commercially run and the entrance fee is quite steep (please see the website for details). The curator, Chris Kidd, is an expert plantsman who has done wonders with the garden.

WORLD GARDEN AT LULLINGSTONE CASTLE

Eynsford, Kent DA4 0JA

t 01322 862114

www.lullingstonecastle.co.uk



All photographs by Alan Bromley

The Collection

The brainchild of Tom Hart Dyke, work began on the cactus house in the World Garden in January 2008 and it opened in the March. The collection has expanded through purchases and donations but many plants have been grown from seed, including a magnificent *Euphorbia declivatifolia*, now some 15 feet tall after only nine years.

Planting in open beds can make cacti and succulent grow really fast and this is evident from the magnificent specimens on show. Plants are arranged phytogeographically and there is a wide selection of many genera. This is not a serious botanical collection, more a celebration of xerophytic plants, one that is intended to show the diversity of cacti and succulents, as well as the other plants that grow alongside them in the wild (and a few that don't!).

Tom, one of the BCSS's Patrons, continues to replant and refine the collection and it changes from year to year.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Bromley: www.bromley.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Keston. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

Lullingstone Castle is located in a beautiful spot a short drive from the M25. As well as the World Garden there are extensive grounds to explore as well as the house itself. There is a tea room and a small shop where you can buy signed copies of Tom's book. You might even bump into the man himself who's there most days. This is a place to visit with the whole family. Nearby are Roman ruins managed by English Heritage.

Members of the BCSS can visit the World Garden free of charge. Please email in advance (info@lullingstonecastle.co.uk) to give your membership number and say when you are coming and your name will be registered at the gate. Alternatively, just bring your membership card if you have one, or the address page from your latest *CactusWorld* with your number on it.

LEICESTER UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDEN

University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH

t 0116 271 2933

www2.le.ac.uk/institution/botanic-garden



Photographs courtesy of Rachel Benskin

The Collection

Begun in 1921 and at its present site in Oadby since 1947, the gardens currently comprise 16 acres surrounding four halls of residence. There are formal gardens, including beds planted according to botanical families, woodlands (and an arboretum), meadows, a water garden and ponds, and collections of fuchsias and aubrietias. Besides all this, there are of course a number of glasshouses.

One of these, next to Beaumont House on the east side of the gardens, was converted to a desert house in the mid 1970s and now hosts an array of large cacti and succulents planted in open beds with a meandering path through the middle.

Species include a number of tall cereoids, mammillarias, *Thelocactus*, *Echinocereus grusonii*, large agaves, and the occasional smaller specimens such as stapeliads.

The BCSS recently funded the development and production of three information panels, as well as botanical labels, for the desert house. The local branch has provided much support to the collection.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Leicester: www.leicester.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Braunstone, Leicester. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN

Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AZ

t 01865 286690

www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/



Photograph by Ian Wallman, Oxford University Images

The Collection

Oxford University has its main botanic garden in the centre of Oxford while the Harcourt Arboretum is about six miles outside the city.

The city centre garden has a glasshouse with an arid section containing a small selection of large plants, mostly succulents. There is a very large *Nolina* (*Beaucarnia*) *recurvata*, three tall pachypodiums, a huge *Agave* (probably *A. americana*) and a very nice *Xanthorrhoea* which was in flower in late 2017.

In the humid passage leading to the arid house there are a number of *Rhipsalis* or *Lepismium* epiphytic cacti but apart from these and a couple of cereoids labelled *Cereus uruguayensis* (= *C. hildmannianus*) there are no cacti of any note.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Oxford: www.oxford.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Oxford. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

The collection used to be larger and when viewed in October 2017 it seemed a little neglected, with several plants not being in the best of condition and others having outdated names on their labels. Although the cactus and succulent collection itself is not worth a special visit, the gardens are, despite the entrance fee. This was originally a physic garden and, being walled, is a pleasant place to sit. The time to visit would be in the summer when the bedded plants and trees are at their best.

SHEFFIELD BOTANICAL GARDENS

Clarkehouse Road, Sheffield S10 2LN*

t 0114 250 0500

www.sbg.org.uk



All photographs by Mike Thewles

*There are also entrances at Botanical Road and at Thompson Road (postcode S11 8RB)

The Collection

The gardens opened in 1836 and after various changes in ownership, management of the gardens was taken over by Sheffield Corporation in 1951. In 2007 major work funded in part by The Heritage Lottery Fund was completed. This included the restoration of the Joseph Paxton Pavilions. At the west end of the Pavilions is a New World cactus & succulent bed (with a fringe of African *Portulacaria*). This has several tall columnar plants, *Cleistocactus*, *Trichocereus*, and *Pachycereus*; some large globular cacti, *Ferocactus*, *Echinocactus* and *Mammillaria*, and various smaller cacti and succulents, including a large *Beaucarnia*. The adjacent South African area has some succulents, mainly aloes and *Agave attenuata*.

In the Mediterranean Climate Garden a large *Aloe striatula* flourishes in the open, with some large *Fascicularia* and *Puya*.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Sheffield: www.sheffield.bcss.org.uk

Meetings are held in the city centre at the Scout HQ, usually the second Friday of the month. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

The Botanical Gardens are well worth visiting. The cactus and succulent collection, although limited in the range of species, does have a few large plants which are worth going to see.

ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS KEW

Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AE

t 020 8332 5655

www.kew.org



Main photograph courtesy of Kew Gardens; inset of the Princess of Wales Conservatory by Jim Wilson

The Collection

The Princess of Wales Conservatory is a stunning building opened in 1987. It comprises ten computer-controlled climate zones, with the majority of the area given over to plant from the dry tropics and wet tropics. There are orchids, water lilies, carnivorous plants and bromeliads, as well as cacti and succulents within these various zones. The collection of cacti extends outside the conservatory (as shown in the photograph) where some hardier species grow.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Kingston-upon-Thames: www.kingston.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Kingston. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

While the collection may appear limited to the expert grower, those in the BCSS who are 'in the know' have seen the reference collection hidden away behind the scenes. This is available to view only by special invitation but there's still plenty to see in the arid zone. The gardens are world class, truly stunning, and one of the greatest botanical gardens in the world. You need a whole day here to do it justice.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY WISLEY

Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB

t 01483 224234

www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley



All photographs by Alan Bromley

The Collection

The RHS is noted for its very neat, formal outdoor planting and the cactus and succulent house is no less impressive. Part of a large greenhouse complex, the arid collection is of a good size allowing plants to grow in open beds means that the number of species is restricted. Some larger plants have had to be lopped. There are a number of smaller plants in pots, including a few rather interesting specimens. The collection is about two-thirds 'other succulents' with the cacti being not all that well represented.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Woking: www.woking.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Knaphill, Woking. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

These are some of the best specimens you are likely to see anywhere and have the green-fingered touch of the RHS. While the variety is not great, particularly among the cacti, the quality is generally superb. Wisley is definitely worth a visit as the gardens are beautiful. Even if you don't like such formal planting you can but wonder at the variety of plants in the garden and the care lavished on them. Wisley is currently undergoing a £60M revamp, due for completion in early 2019, but that should not spoil your visit. The Plant Centre (shop) has quite a large range of cacti and succulents for sale, including names species which may be of more interest to members than the ones that are clearly intended for home décor.

BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS

Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3TR

t 0121 454 1860

www.birminghambotanicalgardens.org.uk/the-glasshouses/



All photographs by Wyl Durrant

The Collection

The gardens are 6 hectares (15 acres) in size with a Tropical House, Subtropical House, Mediterranean House, and Arid House. The whole site contains around 7,000 accessions and it is an independent educational charity.

The Arid House has a collection of 80 species of cacti, succulents and caudiciforms, excluding non-succulent arid plants from other families. There is a mature *Opuntia elatior* (see photograph) which at 4m may be the largest specimen in the UK and is around 50 years old.

There has been an outdoor display for more than 30 years in the summer on the Loudon terrace containing *Pachycereus pringlei*, *Opuntia stricta*, *Cleistocactus straussii*, *Aloe buettneri*, *Aloe polyphylla*, and *Agave attenuata*, to mention just a few. The first of these was kindly donated by Winterbourne Botanic Garden to which it had been donated by BCSS chairman Ian Thwaites. The outdoor display was planted by Eddie Adams (Horticulturist) with the help of Nigel Hopes & Wyl Durrant (Horticulturists), Ben Taylor (apprentice) and Joshua Tranter (volunteer).

Nearest BCSS Branch

Birmingham: www.birmingham.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held at Winterbourne (see next entry). Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

The gardens host the branch's annual Autumn Show in early October (see the branch website).

A Member's View

A sizeable botanical garden with lots to see and well worth a visit if you are in Birmingham, particularly if combined with a trip to Winterbourne.

WINTERBOURNE HOUSE & GARDEN BIRMINGHAM

Edgbaston Park Road, Birmingham, B15 2RT

t 0121 414 3003

www.winterbourne.org.uk



Photograph by Gill Mills

The Collection

Winterbourne is an Edwardian House built for John and Margaret Nettlefold in 1903 and is now owned by the University of Birmingham. It is open to the public all year round (see website for details); the house has an exhibition about the lives of the family that lived there. The Grade II listed garden, one of the best surviving examples of an Edwardian Arts and Crafts suburban villa garden, was lovingly created by the Nettlefolds using inspiration from the books of Gertrude Jekyll. It has Mediterranean, Orchid, Alpine and Carnivorous Houses.

Built in 2008, the Arid House contains a large selection of plants maintained by BCSS Birmingham branch. Cacti include *Trichocereus atacamensis*, *Oreocereus celsianus*, *Cleistocactus straussi*, *Echinocactus grusonii*, *Cereus chalybaeus*, *Selenicereus grandiflorus*, and *Denmoza rhodacantha*, together with many species of *Ferocactus*, *Astrophytum*, *Gymnocalycium*, *Mammillaria* and *Opuntia*. Succulents include *Agave americana aurea*, *Beaucarnea recurvata*, *Euphorbia ingens*, *Tylecodon paniculatus*, and several species of *Aloe*. There is an extensive back-up collection of approximately 3,500 plants encompassing most genera of cacti and succulents. This is available for viewing on Tuesdays and Fridays, 10:00 to 14:00.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Birmingham: www.birmingham.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held at Winterbourne. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme. The branch also holds an annual Autumn Show at the neighbouring Birmingham Botanical Gardens in early October.

A Member's View

The house and gardens are a hidden gem, with something of interest all year. The garden has many unusual plants and trees and there is a walk through to a large lake. The Arid House gets many compliments and has a wide range of cacti and succulents all planted out in the ground and there is usually something in flower to enjoy. Entry is free to RHS Members on Monday to Wednesday. There is an excellent tea room where you can enjoy light meals on the terrace.

CLIFFE CASTLE GARDEN KEIGHLEY

Spring Gardens Lane, Keighley BD20 6LH

t 01535 618 231

www.bradfordmuseums.org/venues/cliffe-castle-museum



Work in progress, March 2017; photograph by David Quail

The Collection

Cliffe Castle was originally the home of Henry Butterfield, a prominent Victorian textile manufacturer. Completed in 1880, it was renowned for its collection of decorative art. The house became a museum in the 1950s after being bought by a local philanthropist.

In need of restoration, it received Heritage Lottery funding, which included restoration of the glasshouse. This has been redeveloped with help from BCSS Bradford branch which has advised on the temporary storage of plants, and on composts and scenery for the new beds. They have also supplied additional plants as well as a team to assist in the replanting. As of March 2018 the work is complete but the collection will take some time to settle in. There are plans to have information boards provided by the BCSS, as well as to provide ongoing support and advice.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Bradford: www.bradford.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Saltaire. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

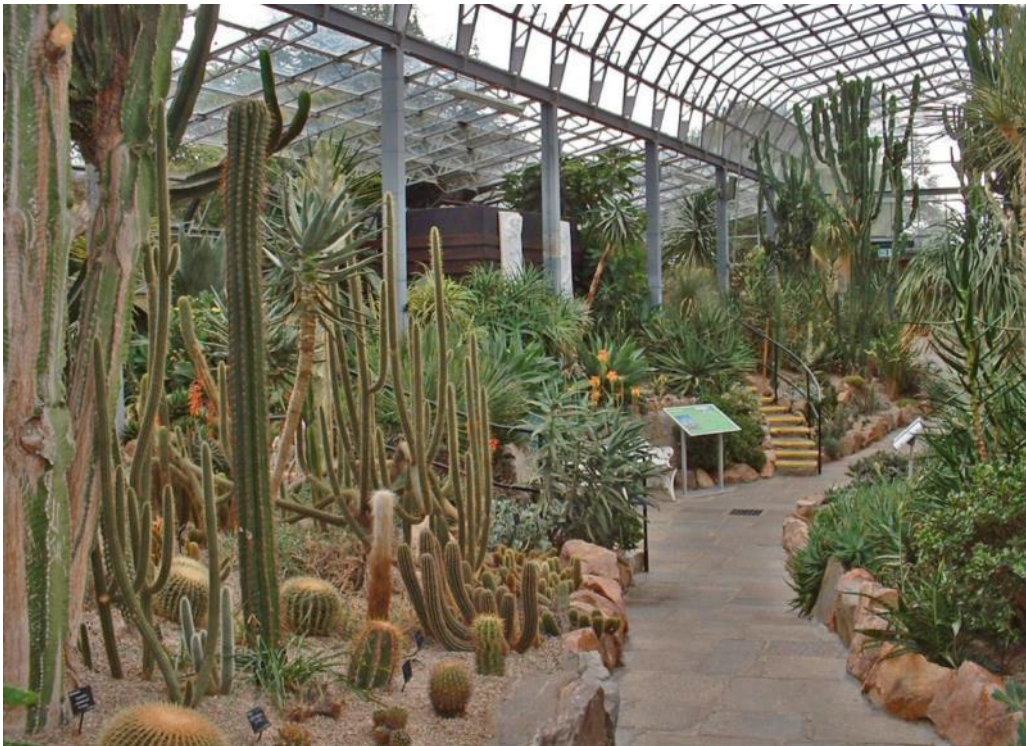
It is still early days for the new greenhouse collection but please do try to pay a visit and support the local branch in their endeavours.

DUTHIE PARK ABERDEEN

Polmuir Road, Aberdeen AB11 7TH

t 01224 585 310

<http://tinyurl.com/aberdeencacti> CHANGE!!!



Photograph courtesy of Alan Findlay, Park Manager

The Collection

The David Welch Winter Gardens at Duthie Park is the jewel in the crown of Aberdeen's parks. Although Duthie Park had been largely laid out by 1883 the Winter Gardens (or Palm House as it was then known) was only completed in 1899. In the late 1960s the original structure was demolished for safety reasons and the first phase of the current Winter Gardens opened in April 1970. Since then there have been several phases of expansion and the gardens now cover two acres and are one of the largest covered gardens in Europe.

As well as three outside areas to explore, there are twelve glasshouses including an Arid House which has an impressive display of plants ranging from Central America to Southern Africa, and from Arabia to Madagascar. Back in 1983-85 most of the large plants on display were lifted and transported to the Chelsea Flower Show where they gained gold medals. The oldest specimen is an *Echinocactus grusonii* which is over 100 years old. The Arid House is home to National Collections of the genera *Aloe* and *Gasteria*.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Grampian: www.grampian.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Aberdeen. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

One of Scotland's finest collections of cacti and succulents, this is worthy of a visit, as are the gardens as a whole. Put it on your must-see list whether you are a local or on holiday in Scotland.

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE BOTANIC GARDEN

Riverside Drive, Dundee DD2 1QH

t 01382 381190

www.dundee.ac.uk/botanic



All photographs by Jim Gibbs

The Collection

Started in the early 1970s, the founding principles of this botanical garden are 'science, education and conservation', with the aim of sharing this knowledge with the local community. There are two conjoined greenhouses, the first being a tropical, humid greenhouse (including a lily pond) leading to a second cooler, more arid house including a modest collection of cacti and succulents taking up an area of about 9 x 12 m (30 x 40 ft).

Among the cacti are *Carnegiea gigantea* (saguaro), and species of various genera such as *Cleistocactus*, *Echinopsis*, *Ferocactus*, *Hylocereus*, *Matucana*, *Opuntia*, *Oreocereus*, *Parodia*, *Rhipsalis* (tree-growing species) and *Trichocereus*.

Succulent include various species of *Aloe*, *Agave*, *Echeveria*, *Crassula*, *Kalanchoe*, *Senecio* and *Euphorbia*, along with several mesembs (Aizoaceae) and southern African bulbs such as *Boophane disticha*, *Bowiea volubilis*, and *Nerine* sp, which are often grown by BCSS members.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Fife: www.fife.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held in Cupar. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

This garden is worth a visit if you are in Dundee. A small area of cacti and other succulents housed at the end of one of the two greenhouses has a mixture of mature and younger plants. While lacking in the variety of species, there is a nice collection of aloes including a large *Opuntia* that flowers regularly. The most notable plants are a very old *Crassula ovata*, an *Aloe dichotoma*, a tall *Euphorbia*, some large cerei and a couple of floriferous cleistocacti.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH

Inverleith Row, Edinburgh, EH3 5LR

t 0131 552 7171

www.rbge.org.uk



Photograph by Alan Bromley

The Collection

The glasshouse complex at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh (RBGE) is the jewel in the crown of this wonderful green oasis in Scotland's capital. A modest entry charge (the main gardens are free) gives you access to ten different environments, including the Arid Lands House. The greenhouse has a broad central path resembling a dried-out river bed, leading through a planted rocky landscape with themes representing both the New World cacti and succulents along with aloes and euphorbias from Africa and the Middle East. Many are to be found alongside other plants, some of which are true companion plants but other are ones that add interesting contrast, such as cycads, bromeliads, ferns, and many herbs and annuals.

The collection has some very old plants, including a clump of four enormous *Nolina recurvata*, a very large *Dioscorea elephantipes*, *Fouquieria splendens*, *Euphorbia abyssinica*, *E. ingens*, *Dracaena cinnabari*, and *Cyphostemma juttae*. The living collection can be seen here: <http://elmer.rbge.org.uk/bgbase/livcol/bgbaselivcol.php>

Outside there is a converted plunge bench that has been adapted for perennial planting, with a polycarbonate roof protecting the plants from the worst of the winter rain. Included here are desert shrubs and ferns and many cacti: *Opuntia*, *Echinopsis*, and *Gymnocalycium* species, as well as succulents such as agaves and echeverias, all planted in pure sand.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Fife: www.fife.bcss.org.uk

Meetings are held in Cupar. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

The greenhouse complex is worth a visit in itself, but the gardens as a whole are beautiful and a great way to spend a few relaxing hours. The Arid Lands collection is an imaginative display with lots of familiar, and less familiar, species. Senior Horticulturalist, Gunnar Ovstebo, has done a great job in developing the collection.

GLASGOW BOTANICAL GARDENS

730 Great Western Rd, Glasgow G12 0UE

t 0141 276 1614

www.glasgowbotanicgardens.com



All photograph by Ewen Brown

The Collection

Glasgow Botanical Gardens, owned and run by Glasgow City Council, are open every day of the year and entry is free. The gardens celebrates their bicentennial anniversary in 2017 and provide an historic Victorian oasis that combines beautifully laid-out gardens with a fascinating range of glasshouses. The most famous of these is the Kibble Palace, a charming and extraordinary dome, housing ferns, carnivorous plants and exotic flora from all over the world.

The gardens boast an excellent collection of cacti and succulents covering two glasshouses. The first is a collection of succulents which has just been replanted and contains mainly juvenile specimens. There is a central bed and two benches either side of the access paths with a wide selection of succulent genera, including *Adenia*, *Aloe*, *Caralluma*, *Cotyledon*, *Crassula*, *Cyphostemma*, *Dioscorea*, *Euphorbia*, *Gasteria*, *Glottiphyllum*, *Sansevieria*, and *Pachypodium*.

The second glasshouse contains a more mature collection of plants living in a central bed comprising large agaves, aloes, cleistocacti and many more cereiod cacti. Two benches either side have recently been replanted with juvenile plants, including columnar cacti, *Austrocylindropuntia*, *Echinopsis*, *Mammillaria* and *Parodia* species.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Glasgow: <http://bcssglasgow.org>

Meetings are held at the botanical gardens. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

If you have some time during your visit to Glasgow, you won't be disappointed by one of the oldest botanic gardens in the UK. Rain or shine, there's always something to see.

INVERNESS BOTANICAL GARDENS

Bught Lane, Inverness IV3 5SS

t 01463 713553

www.highlifehighland.com/inverness-botanic-gardens



Photograph courtesy of Inverness Botanical Gardens

The Collection

The Cactus House was constructed in 1996 and a plaque commemorates the help provided by the Highlands & Islands branch of the BCSS who advised on planning and planting and assisted with maintenance.

In terms of succulents the collection hosts a wide range of quite unusual species of *Agave*, *Aloe*, *Crassula*, *Echeveria*, *Kalanchoe* and *Sedum*. Among the numerous cacti there are species of *Astrophytum*, *Cleistocactus*, *Echinocactus*, *Echinocereus*, *Echinopsis*, *Ferocactus*, *Mammillaria*, *Opuntia*, *Parodia*, *Rebutia*, *Selenicereus* and *Stenocactus*.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Highlands & Islands: www.handi-cacti.org.uk

Meetings are held in Inverness. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

ST ANDREWS UNIVERSITY BOTANIC GARDENS

Canongate, The Botanic Garden, St Andrews, Fife KY16 8RT

t 01334 476452

www.standrewsbotanic.org



All photographs courtesy of Kirsty Wilson

The Collection

A desert glasshouse showcases their cacti and succulents as well as a potted display house, with plants from the New World (North, Central and South America) and the Old World (predominantly Africa, Madeira and the Canary Islands).

From the Americas there are cacti as well as *Agave*, *Puya* and *Yucca* species.

There is an educational exhibition on how plants adapt to drought as well as convergent evolution. Flowers can be seen all year round.

The gardens have recently arranged a display of cacti and succulents in terracotta pots and drift wood and have created succulent displays such as wreaths and table decorations throughout the garden.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Fife: www.fife.bcss.org.uk

Meetings are held in Cupar. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

TREBORTH BOTANIC GARDENS

Treborth Coastal/Forest Path, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2RX

t 01248 353 398

treborth.bangor.ac.uk/glasshouses/temperate.php.en



All photographs by John Gorham

The Collection

The succulent collection was established in the mid-1970s, with various collections and odd plants added over the years. In 1977 the raised arid bed was created and in 2008 the extended cactus and succulent mound was constructed. The plants are arranged geographically, starting on the left with African succulents and North American species to the right, although most of the cacti in the original cactus bed near the back of the Temperate House were too big to move. There is a further bed reserved mainly for species that like partial shade.

Nearest BCSS Branch

Chester & North Wales: www.chester.bcsc.org.uk

Meetings are held at the Ness Botanic Gardens, South Wirral. Please see the branch website for meeting dates and programme.

A Member's View

IS IT A CACTUS IS IT A SUCCULENT?

The true cacti belong to the plant family Cactaceae, a fascinating group of succulents found only in North and South America and the Caribbean islands. They are all related and share common characteristics but they are very variable in size, with some species when fully grown growing more than 20m tall while others being less than a centimetre in diameter.

Equally fascinating are what are usually referred to as 'other succulents', a very diverse group of plants encompassing many different botanical families. These are found in arid regions right across the world.

What cacti and other succulents have in common is that they have evolved to survive periods of drought by means of swollen and fleshy leaves, stems, or roots, resulting in forms and features that make them highly variable in appearance and endlessly interesting to cultivate.

A number of cacti and succulents are economically important: some are edible or used to make drinks (think tequila!), others have medicinal properties, and a few have practical uses such as in making rope and furniture.

Many cacti and succulents are easy to grow on a sunny south-facing windowsill, but a greenhouse or conservatory is preferable if you plan to build a collection. Some can be readily propagated by means of cuttings, offshoots or leaves, which means you can share them with your friends and family!

Seeds are available on the internet and while this means of cultivation requires a bit of patience, seeing a cactus or succulent that you have grown from seed come into flower can be one of the most rewarding aspect of the hobby.

Whatever growing facilities you have available to you there's always something that will flourish and bloom. The BCSS is here to help novices and experienced growers alike so please visit our website for more information, or come to one of our branch meetings and meet some of our members.

Want to know more?

A collection of cultivation guides in a handy plastic wallet is available for £3.50 (including UK postage) from our website. The pack includes a discount voucher for new membership. The society also publishes a number of specialist books which can also be ordered from the website.

www.bcsc.org.uk



Cacti: Left, US National Parks Service, right, Trevor Sellman



Other succulents: 1, 2, 4 Alan Bromley, 3 Helen Wilson, 5 Anne Adams, 6 public domain image

THE BCSS

The charitable aims of the BCSS are to promote the study, conservation, propagation and cultivation of cacti and other succulents. Membership of the Society is truly international and is open to anyone with an interest in these fascinating plants. We currently have about 3,000 members and this includes people with a range of interest experience, from novice window-sill growers to experts with enormous collections.

We have more than 70 branches in the UK and Ireland, each of which meets nearly every month and many organise local events each year. Although the majority of our members are in the British Isles we also have a large overseas membership covering more than 60 countries.

All members receive *CactusWorld*, our high-quality quarterly magazine packed with interesting articles; access to our members-only areas of our website; and an annual seed list with many rare and interesting species.

Education is key to the activities of the BCSS and we use many ways to promote knowledge of the plants we love to cultivate. There is lots of information on our website, and help is available through our Forum and via our public interest group page on Facebook (our main Facebook page is for official announcements). As well as our quarterly journal, we also publish a yearbook, *Bradleya*, with scientific papers on the latest research on cacti and succulents. We also collaborate with experienced authors to publish books on a wide range of plant groups.

The Society's branches offer opportunities to meet with other members, listen to fascinating talks, and buy plants (and sometimes seeds). A few branches have libraries of books for members to borrow, and the Society maintains electronic libraries of books, journals, presentations and reference materials via its website. As well as Junior Membership, the BCSS is currently developing educational material for use in primary schools in the UK.

Our National Show takes place every four years (the next is in 2020), as does our International Convention (the next is 13-15 July 2018). For more details please see our website.

Join today!

Membership costs only £15 per annum (£12 if you are 65+, or £6 if you are under 18) and receive the quarterly magazine, *CactusWorld*, and great benefits.

For more information on the Society please visit our website: www.bcss.org.uk

BCSS BRANCHES

Ayr	Leeds
Barrow & District	Leicester
Berkhamsted & District	Lincoln & District
Birmingham & District	Littlehampton
Bradford	Liverpool
Brighton, Hove & District	Lowestoft
Bristol	Luton
Bromley	Macclesfield & E Cheshire
Cambridge & District	Maidstone & Medway
Chelmsford	Manchester
Chester & North Wales	Northampton & Milton Keynes
Clacton-on-Sea	North Devon
Cornwall	North Fylde
Coventry	Northern Ireland
Croydon	North Surrey
Dartford	Northumbria
Derby	Norwich
Dover	Nottingham
Dublin & District	Oxford
Edenbridge	Peterborough
Exeter	Plymouth
Fife	Portsmouth & District
Glasgow	Reading & Basingstoke
Gloucester	Sheffield
Grampian (NE Scotland)	Somerset
Harrow	South Wales
Havering & District	Southampton & District
Herne Bay & District	Southend-on-Sea & District
Highlands & Islands	Southport
High Wycombe	Spalding
Huddersfield	Stoke-on-Trent
Hull & East Riding	Teesside
Isle of Wight	Waltham Forest
Kettering	Wiltshire
Kings Lynn	Woking
Kingston-on-Thames & District	York
Lea Valley	

COME TO A BRANCH MEETING!

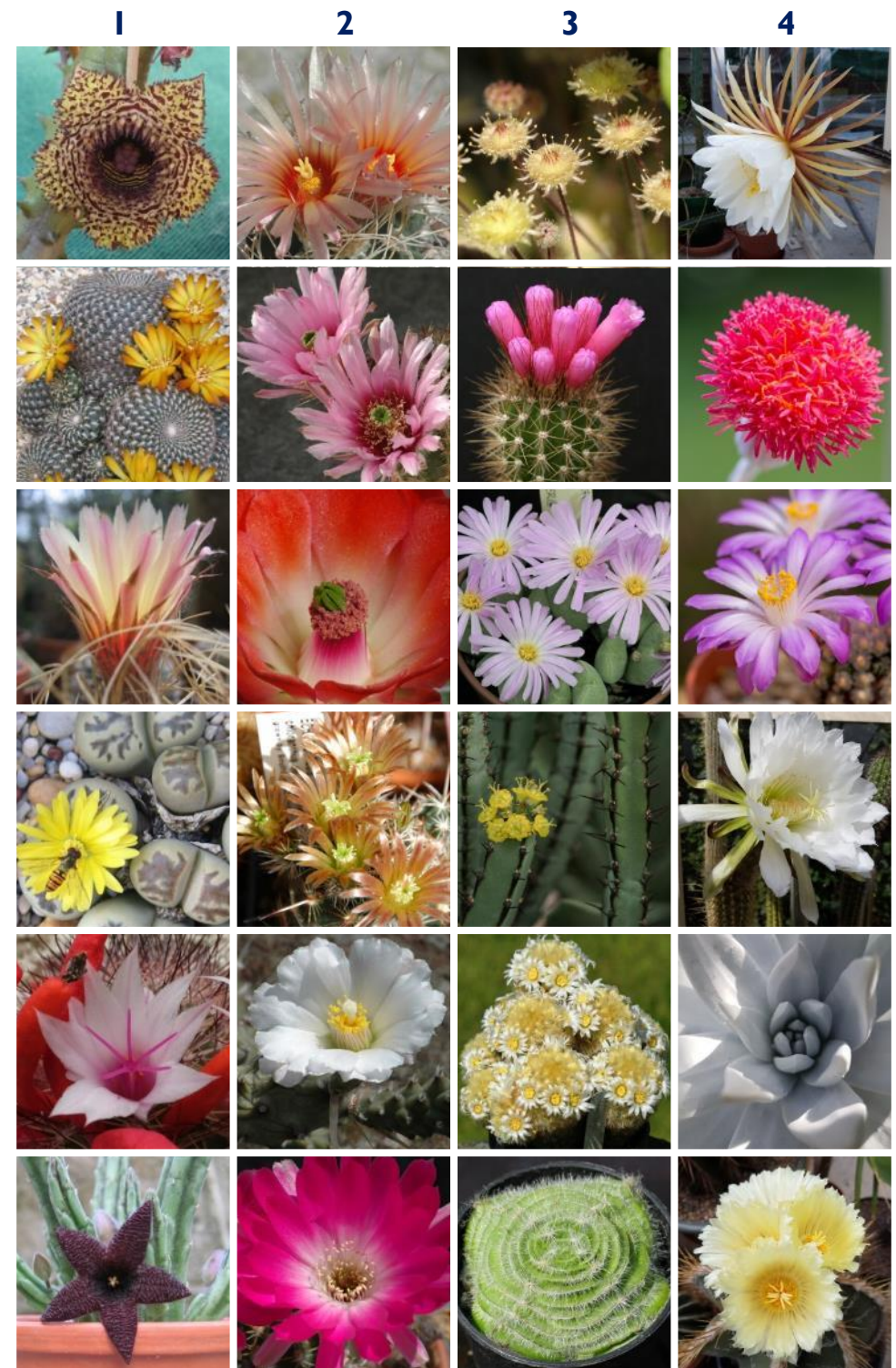
You don't need to be a member of the BCSS to attend a branch meeting. Most branch meetings are free but a few branches make a small charge to cover the cost of venue hire. There are usually refreshments and plants (and sometimes seeds) for sale.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The BCSS is active on Facebook, Twitter (@CactusSucculent) and Instagram and Pinterest (both @BCSS_CactusWorld) which aim to provide tips on cultivation, news about upcoming events, and some really excellent photographs. If you use any of these please follow us and share with your friends.

On the right is a selection of the photographs posted in 2017, all contributed by BCSS members.

Photographs by Helen Wilson (column 1), David Hartnell (2), Anne & Peter Adams (3) and Alan Bromley (4).





British Cactus & Succulent Society

Charity No. 290786 – a charity registered in England and Wales

Patrons: Anne Swithinbank & Tom Hart Dyke

History of the BCSS

The British Cactus & Succulent Society was formed at the beginning of 1983 by the amalgamation of the National Cactus and Succulent Society (1945-1982) and the Cactus and Succulent Society of Great Britain (1932-1982). The old 'GB Society', as it was affectionately called, began in the midst of the Great Depression as an affiliate of the Royal Horticultural Society. It held its early meetings and kept a modest library in a room at the RHS Hall in London. The principal driving force behind it was Vera Higgins (1892-1962), the first editor of its journal in the seven years leading up to World War 2. During the war years she edited the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*, and was awarded a Victoria Medal of Honour in 1946.

As Britain emerged from a post-war period of austerity it looked like the GB Society was not going to survive so a small group of Yorkshire stalwarts, led by the Bradford mill owner Herbert Michael Roan (1909-2003), formed the Yorkshire Cactus Society, publishing what was at that time a very high-quality journal from March 1946. By the start of the following year, it had flourished so well that it became a national institution and was renamed the National Cactus & Succulent Society.

Meanwhile, perhaps spurred into action by this new upstart, the Cactus & Succulent Society of Great Britain was reformed and began republishing its journal in July 1946. But it was too late! The new 'National' society's journal led it to take the dominant position. Mrs Vera Higgins spotted the winner in this race and accepted the position of President of the National Cactus & Succulent Society from 1949 till 1962. Although these two societies remained in amicable competition (many members belonged to both), the Cactus & Succulent Society of Great Britain never really thrived. Indeed, it was almost on the point of failing when David Hunt (b1938) became the new editor of its journal in 1976, and he managed to restore some of the lost support by steadily improving it with some new innovations.

The uneasy coalition of the two rival societies in 1983 was not at first without its stresses and strains, but it soon became accepted and welcomed by all, taking its rightful place as a highly respected, world-class organisation.

