Notes on a type locality
or
Where in the world was David Griffiths?

David Griffiths did significant work in the Cactaceae. *Das grosse Kakteen-Lexikon* (Anderson 2005) credits him as author of 17 accepted taxa in the genus *Opuntia*, with an additional three in what is now *Cylindropuntia*. The publication of the basionym *Opuntia chlorotica* Engelm. & J.M. Bigelow var. *santarita* Griffiths & Hare simultaneously improved our botanical knowledge of the genus and left us a geographic puzzle. In the protologue, Griffiths and Hare (1906) list the type, Griffiths 8157, as collected in the “Celero mountains, Arizona, October 8, 1905.” Curiously, the Celero Mountains are not mentioned in the authoritative list of Arizona locations (Barnes 1988). The Celero Mountains have generally been assumed to be the Santa Rita Mountains which straddle Pima and Santa Cruz counties in southern Arizona. However, few specimens exist from the Santa Rita Mountains (SEINet 2014), the majority collected to the south and west of the range. Field work conducted by the authors in March and April of 2014 confirmed the limited distribution of the species in the Santa Rita Mountains.

Like most names in the Cactaceae, this species has been through some revision. It was very quickly raised to the specific level as *Opuntia santarita* (Griffiths & Hare) Rose in 1908. Benson twice moved this to the varietal level, first as *O. gosseliniana* F.A.C. Weber var. *santarita* (Griffiths & Hare) L.D. Benson in 1950, then to *O. violacea* Engelm. ex B.D. Jacks. var. *santarita* (Griffiths & Hare) L.D. Benson in 1969. In 2012 Guiggi returned it to *O. gosseliniana* F.A.C. Weber ssp. *santarita* (Griffiths & Hare) Guiggi. That same year, Majure et al, in their phylogeny, treat it at the specific level and show the species in a clade with *O. gosseliniana* and *O. chlorotica*.

So where was David Griffiths in October 1905 and why should we care? While the type specimen defines the species, the type locality can provide additional clues. Some would struggle to consider a mountain range as a locality. A population can give a much better sense of the range of variation of the species, provide a point of comparison to other populations, and give a sense of the habitat in which the species evolved. It is important enough that for molecular work systematists will seek a DNA sample from the type population if the type specimen no longer exists—as is all too often the case in the Cactaceae. This fact will be of increasing importance as molecular techniques increase their importance in the study of the family (Majure et al. 2012).

The easy guess is that the place name was spelled incorrectly in the publication. Celero does not appear in *Arizona Place Names* (1988). However, Salero Mountain, Salero Ranch and Salero Mine can all be found on a map on the southwest side of the Santa Rita Mountains. The authors did voucher the species in Salero Canyon (Thibault 905 = Guiggi USA21).