



*San Gabriel Valley
Cactus & Succulent Society*

COMMUNIQUE

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc.

April 2010 - Volume 43, Number 4

**April Meeting:
Thursday,
April 8 at 7:30 pm**

Meetings are held on the
2nd Thursday of the month
at **7:30 pm** in the Palm Room,
Los Angeles County Arboretum,
Arcadia.

Mini-Show Plants:

**CACTUS —
Melocactus**

**SUCCULENT—
Dudleya**

Study Group:

Study group will meet on Wednesday,
April 21st in the Palm Room,
Los Angeles County Arboretum at
7:30 pm. The topic will be:

Spring Seed Workshop

Material in the **COMMUNIQUE** publication may be reprinted by nonprofit organizations (unless such permission is expressly denied in a note accompanying the material) provided proper credit is given to the SGVCSS and the author, and that one copy of the publication containing the reprinted material is sent to the editor. Reproduction in whole or part by any other organization or publication without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

President's Message

Spring is finally here, El Nino seems to have gone back to where it came from and it's Growing Time again. These few spring months are the best for most of our plants. So, Happy Growing.

We really appreciated Guillermo Rivera's talk in March. Those beautiful Gymnocalyciums and Echinopsis are among our most prized possessions. His habitat pictures are excellent.

We will have a Board of Directors meeting at Coco's on Michillinda and Colorado Blvd. at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, April 21. That's the night of our April Study Group.

The Study Group for April is our spring Seed Workshop. This is always favorite activity for our members. Don't miss it.

See you at the meeting

Buck Hemenway

This Month's Program

Our speaker for April is Kelly Griffin. He will show a presentation of a recent trip that he and several of our succulent friends took to Cedros Island off of the West Coast of the Baja peninsula. Cedros is Cedar and there are some but the succulent plants on that small island are very interesting.

He will be bringing his special small plants for sale as well. Don't miss this show!

In This Issue

President's Message	1
This Month's Program	1
March Mini-Show Results	2
Winter Show 2009	2
Club Member Events	3
Study Group.	3
Plants Of The Month	4
Welcome New Members	6
Calendar of Upcoming Events	7

March Mini-Show Results

Cacti - Cactus from Oaxaca

Beginner

1st	William Molina	Ortegocactus macdougalii
2nd	William Molina	Polaskia chichipe
3rd	William Molina	Mammillaria huitzilopochili

Intermediate

1st	Pat Swain	Mammillaria crucigera
2nd	Cindy/Calvin Arakaki	Mammillaria haleii
3rd	Cindy/Calvin Arakaki	Mammillaria solisoides
3rd	Barbara Hall	Mammillaria leptacantha

Advanced

1st	Frank Nudge	Mammillaria hernandezii
2nd	Karen Ostler	Mammillaria hernandezii
3rd	Karen Ostler	Mammillaria huitzilopochili
3rd	Karen Ostler	Mammillaria rekoii ssp. leptacantha

Succulents - Medusoid Euphorbia

Beginner

1st	Tom Howard	Euphorbia flanagani
2nd	William Molina	Euphorbia flanagani
3rd	Judi Romine	Euphorbia medusa sp.

Intermediate

1st	Cindy/Calvin Arakaki	Euphorbia decepta
2nd	Cindy/Calvin Arakaki	Euphorbia woodii
3rd	Dodson-Birgh	Euphorbia flanagani
3rd	Gunnar Eisel	Euphorbia caput-medusae

Advanced

1st	Tom Glavich	Euphorbia pugniformis
2nd	Frank Nudge	Euphorbia gorgonis

Part of the 12 steps of cactoholic senenity

“May we be granted the serenity to accept that the nomenclature will change, the courage to learn the names anyway, and we wisdom to learn the differences (among the various genera).”

Be sure to take a look at the Club’s website at www.sgvcss.com. Thanks to Gunnar Eisel for managing our website. If you wish to receive your **COMMUNIQUE** on-line please notify the editor at yvonne@pricklypalace.com.

Winter Show 2009

The SGVCSS 16th Annual Winter Show was celebrated on November 7 & 8, 2009. It was a great show with beautiful plants (over 900 entries) and wonderful people.

The Show Chair wants to thank all of the Club members who worked hard to set-up and tear down, judges, clerks and tabulators, the people working in the sales area, plant holding, tag counting, back gate guarding, hospitality table, the people in charge of the kitchen who made sure we were fed, all of the exhibitors who brought those gorgeous plants to the show and, of course, all of the vendors and auctioneers.

Total Participants: 59

— Novice 20, Advanced 20, Open 19

Total Entries: 933

— Cactus 337, Succulents 596

Congratulations to all of the winners:

Sweepstakes – Charles & Joann Spotts
 High Points Cacti Novice – Ken Shaw
 High Points Cacti Advanced – Carol & Paul Maker
 High Points Cacti Open – Charles & Joann Spotts
 High Points Succulents Novice – Mary Brumbaugh
 High Points Succulents Advanced – Alan Hooker
 High Points Succulents Open – Jim Hanna

2009 Winter Show Trophy Winners:

Best Cactus Novice – Hannah Nguyen
 Best Cactus Advanced – Pat Swain
 Best Cactus Open – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Succulent Novice – Tom Howard
 Best Succulent Advanced – Debbie & Charles Ball
 Best Succulent Open – Peter Walkowiak
 Best Ariocarpus – Vince Basta
 Best Mammillaria – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Epiphytic Cactus – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Gymnocalycium – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Rebutia/Sulcorebutia – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Opuntia – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Agave – Mary Braumbaugh
 Best Mesemb – Tom & Jeanette Glavich
 Best Haworthia – Charles & Joann Spotts
 Best Madagascan Euphorb – Cindy & Calvin Arakaki

Winter Show 2009 - Cont'd.

- Best Euphorbia – Larry Grammer
- Best Dorstenia – Gene & Laura Oster
- Best Crassulaceae – Petra Crist
- Best Geraniaceae – Debbie & Charles Ball
- Best Pachypodium – Buck & Yvonne Hemenway
- Best Winter Growing Succulent – Petra Crist
- Best Collection – Bill Hagblom
- Best Mutant – Vince Basta
- Winter Thematic Award – Vince Basta
- Best Baja Plant – Petra Crist
- Best Mexican Plant – Tom & Jeanette Glavich
- Best Miniature – Vince Basta

Thanks Everybody!
 Show Chair, Manny Rivera

Club Member Events

— Caro Desert Nursery Sale

Here are some photos sent in by Patty Caro. Looks like everyone had a great day.



Miles and miles of pottery.



Gene Oster shopping the collection plants.

Study Group

Wednesday, April 21st • Spring Seed Workshop

The study group is an informal, hands-on learning experience that is fun for expert and novice alike. Come and learn from the experience of others. We are always happy to share our knowledge.

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Palm Room at the LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia.



Barbara Hall one-on-one with Larry Grammer.

The happy student with her mentor and completed project.



Mary Apricio and William Molina learning Bonsai basics with John Luhn.

SGVC&SS LEADERSHIP TEAM - 2010

- Buck Hemenway, President
- Horace Birgh, Vice President
- Ana Wisnev, Treasurer
- Irma Juarez, Secretary
- Phil Skonieczki, Board Member
- Karen Ostler, Board Member

- Ralph Massey, Board Member
- Bill Gerlach, Board Member
- Patty Caro, Board Member
- Judi Romine, Board Member
- Manny Rivera, Winter Show Chair
- Tom Glavich, Intercity Show Chair

- Jim Hanna, CSSA Affiliate Representative and Plant Sales Chair
- Woody Minnich, Program Chair
- Bill Gerlach, Membership Chair
- Liz Alba, Library Chair
- Gunnar Eisel, Website Chair

Plants Of The Month

Enter your specimen plants in our monthly minishow. It will help you prepare for the real shows and give you an additional opportunity to show others your pride and joy. If you don't have any of these species of plants you can learn about them at the meeting.

CACTUS OF THE MONTH —

Melocactus

A *Melocactus* was very likely the first cactus seen by an European explorer, and certainly one of the first to be brought back and successfully grown. They were known in English collections by the late 16th century, less than 60 years after Columbus' first voyage. It's likely that he or other early explorers also brought back some *Opuntia*, and much more likely that the *Opuntia* survived.

Melocactus are immediately recognizable by the large cephalium that develops on mature plants. *Melocactus* grow as normal appearing but flowerless globular cacti until they reach maturity. This can take from 6 to 15 years in cultivation, with a greater range in habitat. Once they reach maturity, the body stops growing vigorously (it still grows slowly). Most of the plant energy goes into producing a cylindrical flowering and fruiting structure known as a cephalium. This is usually white, with short hairs of yellow, orange or red. As the years go by, the cephalium becomes more cylindrical, with the base becoming more colorful. The flowers are usually a red-purple, and the fruits are almost always a bright red to attract birds. With age, the cephalium can grow to 18 inches or more in height, occasionally bifurcating or trifurcating.

Melocactus are native to a large region, Brazil to Southern Mexico, including a good part of the Caribbean. As might be expected, cacti from the tropical regions, particularly coastal regions are sensitive to cold and wet. Cold and wet conditions can cause scar-

ing of the body, which usually appears as brown or tan lesions on the skin. A few of these are unavoidable, but a badly scarred plant quickly becomes unsightly. At the same time, almost all of the *Melocactus* expect high humidity and a higher moisture level than might be expected. Many grow within sight of the ocean, or in some of the more tropical and humid regions of Brazil. They like water, but demand good drainage.

Melocactus are generally solitary, so the only means of propagation is through seeds. Fortunately they produce plenty of seed, and these germinate readily, particularly when the weather is warm. Keep the seedlings protected from direct sun, and moist until fairly large. Although it is several years from seed to a flowering plant, most of the *Melocactus* have magnificent spination and vividly colored bodies, which make keeping them a pleasant task.

Magnificent Melos:

Melocactus azureus can vary in color from gray to green, but almost all of the plants in cultivation live up to the species name. They are bright blue. This species, when mature, with a rusty red cephalium crowned with a white top and bright red fruits is always a show stopper. From Bahia Brazil, it is also one of the easier species to grow.

Melocactus intortus is a species from the West Indies that becomes partly cylindrical with age, sometimes reaching to 3 feet in habitat. The body is also nicely pattered, with the tubercles being more distinct than on most *Melocactus*, and giving a distinct shape to the ribs.

Melocactus matanzanus is a species from Cuba. The cephalium has bright orange to reddish brown bristles. It stays small, rarely getting to more than a few inches tall. An interesting species from an island whose succulent plants are not well known.

Melocactus oaxacensis is from Mexico, as the name implies. It is a dull green, with a red cephalium. The cephalium tends to the brownish, giving this a different appearance than many of the other species. The flowers are larger than many of the other species.



Melocactus warasii
Entered in the CSSA 2003 show.

Photo by Tim Nomer

Melocactus paucispinus, another species from Bahia Brazil is subglobose to strongly depressed. (much wider than tall). This species has prominent gray-green ribs, long, fat, gray spines, and a small cephalium. Although not the most showy of the species, it is certainly one of the most interesting.

Melocactus violaceus is a dark green bodied species, usually small and subglobose. The spines are white, the fruit range from pale pink to lilac pink, giving the plant its name.



Melocactus vilaceus crest
Entered in the CSSA 2003 show.
Photo by Tim Nomer

Tom Glavich March 2010

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH —

Dudleya

Dudleya are members of the *Crassulaceae* family, and along with *Echeveria*, *Pachyphytum*, and *Sedum* form the principal members of the succulent New World *Crassulaceae*. *Dudleya* range along the west coast of Mexico, North to Oregon, and inland to Arizona and Nevada.

In spite of their close resemblance to the other New World members of the *Crassulaceae* family, they are distant relatives to all of the other genera. Hybrids between *Dudleya* and *Echeveria* and *Pachyphytum* are unknown.

The most interesting theory on why *Dudleya* are so different from the rest of the American *Crassulaceae* was presented by Charles Uhl of Cornell University. In his article

in the CSSA Journal, he showed that the center of diversity of *Dudleya* is on the Pacific plate, while the center for the rest of the *Crassulaceae* is on the North American plate. Millions of years ago, *Dudleya* came from the same ancestral *Crassulaceae* as *Echeveria*. The intervening period of separation as the Pacific plate moved away and back into the North American Plate was long enough for the genetic changes and mutations to accumulate so that the two genera are no longer able to hybridize.

Dudleya grow naturally in Southern California, and are ideally suited to casual culture. They can be planted in any garden soil, and as long as they are kept reasonably dry during the summer, will grow well. They are winter growers, coming out of dormancy in October or November, when the summer heat finally breaks. They pump up with the first rains, but do most of their growth in March and April. Flowering starts in February, and runs through August, depending on the species and how it's grown. When the summer heat arrives, the plants go back into dormancy.

Most *Dudleya* are low growing, branching shrubs. Propagation of these species is easy. A branch cutting should be allowed to dry for a few days and then planted. Rooting is easy and quick. Best results are obtained either at the start of the growing season, or in mid spring, when active growth is again strong. The single headed species are a bit more risky to propagate. A stem cutting is rooted as above. Often the stem still in the pot will send up at least one head. These can then be separated and grown on, or the multiheaded specimen can be grown. Leaving some active growing leaves on the cut stem will increase the probability of successful regrowth of additional heads on the old stem.



Dudleya brittonii

Dudleya go through cycles of being in and out of fashion. They are on their way back in. Some species are very common, appearing even in discount chain stores. Many cultivars are also available, and can be found in garden shops everywhere. Rarer species occasionally appear at many of the local plant sales.

Dudleya to do right

Dudleya brittonii from

Coastal Baja California, not far south of the border and easily seen from the road is the most spectacular of all the *Dudleya*. This species is a brilliant white, when properly grown and protected from finger marks of the curious.

Dudleya densiflora is native to San Gabriel Canyon and other local canyons in the San Gabriel foothills. This species is certainly one of the best succulents with a native habitat within sight of our meeting hall.

Dudleya farinosa from Coastal Northern and Central California is another brilliant white species, with a short shrubby base. This species is the basis of many cultivars.



Dudleya hassei

Dudleya hassei, a California native from Santa Catalina, and ranging to Baja California and Guadalupe Island is a medium sized shrub, branching while young. It has farinose (glaucous or floury) leaves, and appears pale blue in morning light. The plant shown above is a propagation from an old collection by Peter Sharp.

Dudleya pachyphytum from Cedros Island is one of the more challenging species to grow well. It has thick leaves, covered with a white wax. It, along with *Dudleya brittonii* are the two classic *Dudleya*, always in the competition for an award in any show.



Dudleya pachyphytum

Dudleya viscida from Orange and San Diego counties, now rare and endangered in both, is a unique species. The leaves stay green, but are coated with a slightly sticky substance that traps blowing sand, giving the plants a unique texture and appearance.

Tom Glavich March 2010



Thank you to Tom Glavich for putting together the Plant of the Month article. If you would like to participate by submitting a plant of the month write up for the **Communique**, please contact Tom Glavich at tglavich@sbcglobal.net.



Welcome New Members



Please welcome these new members and make them feel welcome at our functions.

Randy Buck

Laurie Picone

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 10 and 11, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society 2009 Show and Sale at the South Coast Botanical Gardens, 263 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verde Peninsula. (See enclosed flyer.)

April 17 and 18 — Green Scene Plant Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton.

May 1 and 2 — Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City. For information call 310-822-1783.

May 2, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale at the South Coast Botanical Gardens. For information call 310-833-6823.

May 14 and 15, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — Gates Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at the Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon. For information call 951-3608802. Sale on Friday and Saturday - Show on Saturday only.

May 16, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm — Huntington Plant Sale at the South Coast Botanical Gardens. For information call 310-833-6823.

May 16 — Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale at the Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia. For information call 310-670-8148.

May 22 and 23, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm — Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at the Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo, CA for information call 805-237-2054 or go to the website at www.centralcoastcactus.org.

Refreshment Signup

These club members have signed up to provide refreshments at our March meeting.

Joanne Gram
Toni Miguel
Richard Roosman

The first three club members who sign up and bring refreshments each month will receive a **FREE** plant as thanks.

2010 Plant-of-the-Month and Study Group Topics

	Cacti of the Month	Succulent of the Month	Study Group
Apr.	Melocactus	Dudleya	Spring Seed Workshop
May	Ferocactus	Miniatures	Vegetative Propagation Workshop
June	Epiphyte	Lithops	Lithops
July	Thelocactus, Stenocactus	Pachypodiums from Madagascar	Staging
Aug.	Favorite Cactus	Favorite Succulent	Copiapoa
Sept.	Astrophytum	Bursera, Commiphora	Mammillaria
Oct.	Ariocarpus	Sansevieria	Tips and Tricks for Successful Growing
Nov.	Opuntia	Asclepiad	Winter Seed Workshop