

COMMUNIQUE

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc.
Meetings are held at **7:30 PM** on the 2nd Thursday of the month
in the Lecture Hall, Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia
January 2006 Volume 39 Number 1

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, January 12th. Start your New Year off right by joining us for Woody Minnich's presentation "Bolivia to Patagonia". Woody's programs are always informative and enjoyable so you won't want to miss it.

Plants of the Month: (see the attached write ups)

CACTI – *Mammillaria Clusters* SUCCULENT – *Aeonium*

Bring your specimens in for our monthly mini-show. It will help you prepare for the real shows and give you an additional opportunity to show others your pride & joy. If you don't have any of this type of plant you can learn about them at the meeting. Remember that at the beginning of the year, it is customary for each member to review his/her ribbon accumulation and step up to the next higher category of competition in both the POM and Club shows when they have exceeded 40 blue ribbons in their current category.

Study Group: Join us on Wednesday, January 18th, when our topic will be Agave. As usual, the meeting will be held in the Grapevine room of the San Gabriel Adult Center, 324 South Mission Dr. (between the San Gabriel Mission and Civic Auditorium) at 7:30 pm. For those who have not attended a Study Group meeting here's a brief description of what goes on. Members are encouraged to bring in materials that relate to the topic of discussion. Club President Joe Clements or another member will often present a brief slide show and preside over a discussion on the day's topic. Also, we usually have a large selection of cuttings and other plants donated by members that are given away by lottery at the end of meeting.

Holiday Plant Info: The plant given to members at our Holiday Party was *Uebelmannia Pectinifra*. Recipients should rear their plants carefully and bring the result to next year's Party. The best surviving *Uebelmannia* will be awarded a prize. Don't forget that the plants given at *all* of the Club's previous Holiday Parties should also be brought in and shown off. Apparently every one mismanaged (killed???) their club gifts as no prior year's plants were brought to the Party.

2006 Dues! It's that time of year again! Club membership dues are due! Send your check to:

SGVC&SS Membership
c/o Bill Gerlach
719 S. Albertson
Covina, CA 91723-3302

Membership is \$12.00 for individuals or \$15.00 for a family (at the same address). Your membership status is printed on the address label, above your name. Your prompt renewals allow us to publish the Roster in a timely manner.

Badges: Anyone desiring a club badge should contact Bill Gerlach by phone at (626) 332-8008, by mail at 719 S Albertson, Covina, CA 91723, by e-mail at billgerlach@verizon.net, or see him at the next meeting. The badges cost the club \$7.00 but the cost to members is just \$3.50.

Get Your COMMUNIQUE Online: POSTAGE IS INCREASING - If you would be content to view the **COMMUNIQUE** on-line in color and not receive a copy by regular mail, thus saving the Club treasury about one dollar per copy, send the information via E-mail to sgv_css@prodigy.net Note that **the Club's web site is** <http://www.desertsong.com/sgvcss/>. If you or someone you know has internet access be sure to have a look. The pages were authored and are maintained by Gunnar Eisel who has done a great job in creating an informative and classy site full of helpful links. A full-color version of the **COMMUNIQUE** can be viewed, and downloaded, from the site.

If you have a cactus or succulent related event that you'd like to have announced in the **COMMUNIQUE**, please forward the information to the address given below. Please verify event dates - sometimes events are rescheduled or canceled without adequate advance notice. Articles, Notices and Corrections can be sent via e-mail to: sgv-css@prodigy.net or via post to: San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Newsletter Editor, c/o Evelyn Stevens, 10119 1/2 E. Olive St., Temple City, CA 91780-3345. Material must be received by the last Thursday of the month to be considered for publication in the next issue of the **COMMUNIQUE**. Material in the SGVCSS **COMMUNIQUE** 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 be sent to the editor. Reproduction in whole or part by any other organization or publication without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

"Happiness held is the seed: Happiness shared is the flower."

Author Unknown

San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

Cacti of the Month January 2006 - *Mammillaria Clusters*

Mammillaria is one of the larger genera in the *Cactus* family, and one of the most variable, with some members remaining as solitary columns for their entire lives, some remaining as fingernail size solitary globulars, some clumped and heavily spined with hooks straight sharp spines, or feathery soft spines.



Mammillaria duwei

Although most *Mammillaria* are native to Mexico, some species in the genus can be found from Columbia to Kansas and California. With this wide distribution, the cultivation requirements obviously vary considerably. The species from the tropics and warmer areas are rarely tolerant of cold and damp. Those from the drier desert regions are also intolerant of continued damp, but can take considerable cold. With these restrictions aside, most *Mammillaria* are easy to grow.

The secrets to good growth are a continued supply of fertilizer during the growing season, strong light, and maintenance of a clean and insect free

growing environment. The appearance of white mealy bug egg cases (*Mammillaria's* worst enemy) on the tips of the spines or the appearance of ants means that mealy bugs are sucking the sap and life of the plant. Immediate treatment is required, with a thorough washing, and spraying with an insecticide.

Propagation of *Mammillaria* clusters is easy. Cuttings can be taken at any time during the growing season (April to early November), left to dry for a few days and replanted in a clean potting mix. Rooting is rapid, with short white roots generally appearing after a couple of weeks. *Mammillaria* are one of the easiest species to grow from seed. The seeds are simply placed on top of a damp potting mix, covered with a light coating of gravel, placed in a plastic bag in bright light, but out of direct sun and allowed to germinate. Germination usually occurs in a week or 10 days. The seedlings can stay in the plastic bag for several weeks until they get large enough to survive unprotected, and should then be removed to a still shaded, but brighter and drier environment. Show quality plants can sometimes be grown in just 4 or 5 years, and entries can be ready for seedling classes in as little as 6 months.

Clumping *Mammillaria*

Mammillaria decipiens subsp. campotricha from Queretaro, long known as the birds nest, has a dark green body and long twisting spines that can vary from white to yellow (most common) to red, depending on the clone.

Mammillaria crucigera produces clumps by splitting dichotomously (each head splitting into two). The body ranges from green to almost brown to almost purple. This species is a slow grower.

Mammillaria duwei, shown above is from central Mexico. At first it is slow to pup, but persistence and patience pays off.

Mammillaria elongata, one of the first cacti that everyone grows is easy, and extraordinarily tolerant of abuse. It has the odd characteristic of being very popular and also unfairly neglected, since advanced growers turn ignore this easy grower, even though are a variety of forms and colors, many of which can make a spectacular plant.

Mammillaria geminispina, is a variable species with some varieties having short white spines, while others have long flexible centrals. The plant shown above has one head that has crested.

Mammillaria herrerae is a spectacular small white species, with very dense interlacing spines. It comes from Queretaro Mexico.

Mammillaria lenta, from Coahuila forms mounds of off-white to white. Slower growing than the somewhat similar *M. plumosa*, described below, it is often a show winner.

Mammillaria luethyi from Coahuila, and discovered in 1996 is now available in cultivation. A breathtaking miniature, it has very short white spines on a dark green body.

Mammillaria plumosa is a relatively quick grower, forming mounds of white heads. The heads are covered with white feathery spines, which must be kept dry if the color is to be maintained.



Mammillaria plumosa

Mammillaria viperiana from Puebla Mexico is a white spined species, that clumps from the body, particularly as the main body elongates.



Mammillaria viperiana

Mammillaria voburnensis v. eichlamii from Guatemala is a quick and dense clumper, with areoles covered with yellow wool.

References:

E. Anderson, **The Cactus Family**

J. Pilbeam, **Cactus for the Connoisseur**

R. Craig, **The Mammillaria Handbook**

Tom Glavich December 2005

San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

Succulent of the Month January 2006 – *Aeonium*

Aeonium is a member of the *Crassulaceae* family. *Aeonium* comes from the general Mediterranean area. It is endemic to the Canary Islands, and a majority of the species comes from these small islands. There is also a cluster of species from the Cape Verde Islands, and additional species are spread throughout the Mediterranean from Spain and Morocco to the Arabian Peninsula.



Aeonium tabuliforme

Aeonium and *Sempervivum* are closely related (indistinguishable according to some authors) and share most of the same growth and floral characteristics. In general, *Sempervivum* and hardy and *Aeonium* are not, but not always. *Aeonium* is sometimes referred to as an example of island gigantism of an otherwise small sized genera.

The distinguishing characteristics of both are rosettes, often quite large in the case of *Aeonium* and sometimes tiny in the case of *Sempervivum*. Foliage varies in color from yellow green to purple, with many hybrids and cultivars available.

Aeonium are among the easiest of all succulents to grow. They are winter

growers, perfectly suited to the California climate. They look their best from autumn, shortly after the first real rain, through late spring.



Aeonium castello-paivae

Pot culture is simple. Leave the plants in the garden for the winter rains, and then maintain them through the summer with partial shade and more frequent watering. When weather gets really hot (over 100), and particularly when nights are hot, avoid watering them at all. The plants will be dormant, and water will only encourage rot. They are tolerant of most potting soils, and require no special treatment. Show plants benefit from frequent repotting, and generally do best without long stems.

Propagation by cuttings is simple. Cuttings can be taken during the growing period, (October to March) left overnight to dry slightly, and simply stuck in the ground or fresh potting soil. The cut stem often sets new heads, and the cuttings almost always root quickly. Propagation by seed is also easy, with seed planted in October.

Admirable *Aeonium*:



***Aeonium arboreum v. arboreum*
cv. Zwartkop**

Aeonium arboreum v. arboreum is by far the most common of the Aeonium. It is grown by the millions in Southern California, and many cultivars, which are various shades of purple and green, are available. The cultivar Zwartkop is particularly common. It is a great dark plant for any garden, and tolerant of everything except frost.

Aeonium castello-paivae is one of the species that can be used as a near ground cover. It is densely branched, with the glaucous leaves forming a dense cover, several inches above the ground. It comes from Gomera one of the Canary Islands.

Aeonium lindleyi, from the Canary Islands tends to be a small shrub with rosettes two or three inches across.

The leaves have been reported to provide a relief from burns and pain produced by *Euphorbia latex*.



Aeonium sedifolium

Aeonium sedifolium shown above is one of the many great miniatures. The leaves stay small, and take a wonderful bronze color early in their dormancy period, or whenever stressed.

Aeonium tabuliforme from the Canary Islands is nearly perfectly flat growing. Growers frequently restart it from cuttings in late spring to be ready for early summer shows. This is one of the most difficult to keep looking good for extended periods, and should be restarted from cuttings frequently.

References:

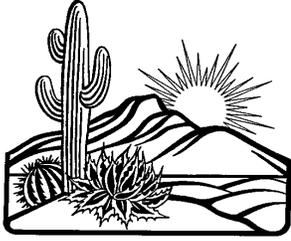
Jacobsen, H., A Handbook of Succulent Plants

Sajeva, M. and Costanzo, M.,
Succulents The Illustrated Dictionary
Stephenson, Sedum Cultivated
Stonecrops

Tom Glavich December 2005

Calendar of Events - 2006

- February 11th** San Diego C&SS Winter Show and Sale, Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego.
- April 8th - 9th** South Coast C&SS Show and Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes, CA. Pho #(310)832-2262.
- April 23rd** South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes, CA Pho #(310)831-1209.
- April 22nd - 23rd** Green Scene Plant Sale, Fullerton Arboretum.
- May 6th - 7th** Sunset C&SS Show and Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave, Culver City, CA Info (310)822-1783
- May 21st** Huntington Botanical Gardens Plant Sale, 10-5, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA.
- May 21st** Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA. (310)831-1209.
- June 3rd - 4th** San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society – Show and Sale
Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego, CA. Info (619) 477-4779
- June 10th** Gates C&SS 29th Show and Sale. Show (1-4 Sat, 9-4 Sun); Sale (9-4 Sat and Sun), Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Dr, Glen Avon, CA. Info (909) 360-8802.
- June ?** Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale
Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA
Show Info call (818) 363-3432
- Jun 30th- Jul 2nd** CSSA Annual Show and Sale – Sale (30th- 2nd)- Show (1st- 2nd) Huntington Botanical Garden, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA (626) 405-2160 or 2277.
- August 19th-20th** 21st Annual Intercity Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA . Info Call Tom Glavich (626) 798-2430 or Gene Oster (818) 998-9306.
- September 2nd** Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium
All Day at the Huntington.
- September 24th** Long Beach C&SS Annual Auction, Dominguez Adobe, 18127 So. Alameda St., Compton (Dominguez Hills), CA.
- October 14th-14th** SGVC&SS Winter Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia CA.



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Cactus & Succulent Society
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