

**San Gabriel Valley
Cactus & Succulent Society**

COMMUNIQUE

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

February 2014 - Volume 47, Number 1

**February Meeting:
Thursday,
February 13 at 7:30 pm**

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

Mini-Show Plants:

CACTUS:
California Natives

SUCCULENT:
California Natives

C&S Workshop:

The Workshop will meet on Wednesday, February 19th in the Palm Room, Los Angeles County Arboretum at 7:30 pm. The topic will be:

Plant Identification

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President's Message

So this is winter? My plants keep asking me the same question. I can't remember a winter this warm and dry. My winter watering pattern is now all awry.

2014 promises to be a great year for SGVCSS. There are a number of important things afoot. We are very close to obtaining our 501(c)3 non-profit status. This will have a big impact upon us, especially in the financial role we play in the Inter-City show. Also, we are expecting an Ayres Hall remodeling project this year. We do not yet have a firm commitment on a remodeling time frame. However, when it happens, we may need to move our meeting room for a month or so. No worries, we will work through this challenge.

Field trips: We are planning two bus trips this year. Our first trip will be to the Living Desert Zoo and Botanical Garden in Palm Desert with a side-trip to the Annenberg "Sunnylands" estate. The date is March 15th. The second trip will be to the San Diego summer show on June 7th. For those of you who are interested in an over-night trip, we are also putting together a trip to Anza-Borrego sometime in April. Members will provide their own transportation and accommodations. Complete field trip details will be announced at the February 13th meeting.

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January Mini-Show Results

Cactus - Mammillaria Clusters

Novice

1st	Jose Esparrago	M. magnifica
2nd	Brigitte Bergman	M. spinosissima
3rd	Minh Au	M. bocasana
3rd	Minh Au	M. geminispina
3rd	Fred Parrales	M. bombycina

Intermediate

1st	Peter Claridge	M. prolifera
2nd	Rita Gerlach	M. geminispina
3rd	Rita Gerlach	M. decipiens

Masters

1st	John Matthews	M. duwei
2nd	Ken Shaw	M. stricta
3rd	John Matthews	M. supertexta

Succulent - Succulent Bulbs

Novice

1st	Betty Farfan	Boweiea volubilis
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Intermediate

1st	Sandy Chase	Urginia mariima
2nd	Sandy Chase	Drimia depressa

Masters

1st	Manny Rivera	Massonia depressa
2nd	John Matthews	Drimia sp.
3rd	John Matthews	Ornithogalum fimbrimarginatum

Mini-Show Judges Signup

As there were no sign-ups to assist Head Judge Manny Rivera in judging the entries for this month's Mini-Show, we will ask for volunteers at the meeting.

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.

President's Message (cont. from page 1)

Our January C&S Workshop was very well attended. Buck Hemenway's presentation on Landscaping with Cacti and Succulents was one of the best programs in recent memory. The workshops keep growing and growing.

Our SGVCSS website has not been hacked even if Google thinks so. We have reported the problem to Google. Unfortunately, it can take up to six weeks for google to take off the "may have been hacked" flag.

Finally, on a personal note, thank you for the many condolences I have received on the passing of my mother. My special thanks to Tom Vermilion for filling in for me at the last club meeting.

See you at the next meeting.

Gunnar Eisel

This Month's Program

HYBRIDIZING AND PLANT SELECTION – THE ADVANTAGES OF SEED PROPAGATION

Seed propagation offers many advantages over cuttings, divisions and tissue culture. If your goal is to produce an improved type or new strain of plant, then hybridizing or careful plant selection is the best method to make this happen through seed propagation. It is very interesting to see what happens when you cross two closely allied species or even genera. Little changes like which plant is the seed or pollen parent will affect your outcome. The seed parent has dominance on the expressed traits that you will obtain. Hybridizing offers fast results and selected plants of that cross that has desired or interesting traits can be crossed to further enhance the desirable characteristics. The one draw back to hybrids is that they can be sterile, creating a dead end. If these plants are of good quality you can propagate them by the other methods such as cuttings, divisions or tissue culture.

Plant selection requires a good eye, a goal for what you want to achieve and a willingness to go in totally different directions when the opportunity presents itself. This is a slower way of getting results while staying within a species or clonal type. It takes a number of generations and many, many plants to ar-

rive at your goal. Each seed batch must be grown to a size where the true character of the plant is expressed, select those that show promise, cross these with each other then repeating the process until your goal is met.

In this presentation you will be shown many of my hybrids, plants that have gone through the selection process and those that are complete surprises, or freaks. Many are works in progress, some are near completion and others that are at dead ends. On some of the dead ends there is just one sex present, usually just males on some of the dioicous Euphorbias for example. These dead ends are often some of the most interesting and intriguing plants.

My background is a B.S. degree in Ornamental Horticulture from Cal Poly University, Pomona in 1985. Have worked in the nursery and landscape industries since my graduation. My long time dream to have my own nursery started ten years ago and became official two years ago. My interest in succulent plants started at Cal Poly when a friend of mine showed me his Bombax. I fell in love with caudiciform plants and went out and bought many of the plants that are now large specimens that you now see at shows. I got started in the succulent societies 12 years ago when I experienced my first show put on by the San Diego C&SS in Balboa Park. I joined that day. Currently I am on the board of directors for the San Diego C&SS and the CSSA, president of the Palomar C&SS, the San Diego North County Club, show chair for all three San Diego shows and co-chair for the Inter-city show.

Peter Walkowiak



Refreshment Signup

Fred Parrales
Anne Keegan
Sharon Sedillo
Mary Brumbaugh
Nilda Howard

The first **five** club members who sign up and bring refreshments each month will receive a **FREE** plant as thanks. We are also grateful to have goodies from any other club members who just feel like sharing.

Welcome New Members



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

Rico Leon, Montclair
Ann Carnahan, Fullerton

C&S Workshop

Wednesday, February 19th • Plant Identification

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.

SGVC&SS LEADERSHIP TEAM - 2013

Gunnar Eisel, President
 Tom Vermilion, Vice President
 Donn Muhleman, Treasurer
 Pat Swain, Secretary
 Rebecca Mallonee, Director
 Mary Brumbaugh, Director

Louise Stack, Director
 Shaun Adams, Director
 Dean Elzinga, Director
 Horace Birgh, Director
 Manny Rivera, Winter Show Chair
 Tom Glavich, Intercity Show Chair

Jim Hanna, CSSA Affiliate Representative
 Gunnar Eisel, Website Chair
 Woody Minnich, Program Chair
 Bill Gerlach, Membership Chair
 Cindy Arakaki, Librarian

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 —

California Native Cacti

Cacti in California occur mainly in the crismontaine (east of the mountains) deserts: the Great Basin Desert, the Mojave Desert, and the Colorado Desert (a subdivision of the Sonoran Desert). The rain shadow created by the Sierra Nevada, Transverse, and Peninsular ranges provided the arid conditions where cacti flourish. The exception is the few species found



Opuntia basilaris

on the Channel Islands, and in southwestern San Diego County (*Bergerocactus emoryi*, *Cylindropuntia prolifera*, *Ferocactus veridescens*, *Mammillaria dioica*, and four species of *Opuntia*).

By far the largest group of cactus in California are the *Opuntoids*, those we commonly call the Prickly Pears and Chollas. There are about 28 species of Opuntoids native to California and this profusion can be attributed to the prolific reproduction methods including cross-pollination within the same species, hybridization between different species, and asexual (vegetative) reproduction from detached pads, stem joints, and fruits. The 28 species include 11 *Cylindropuntia* (cholla), 2 *Grusonia*, and 15 *Opuntia* (prickly pears).

Opuntoids are a hardy group and seem to flourish almost anywhere in southern California as long as they have good drainage.

Three species of *Coryphantha* are native to the Mojave Desert (*C. alversonii*, *C. vivipara*, and *C. chlorantha*). They are often confused with the similar-

looking *mammillaria* genus, however when they are blooming, *Coryphantha* flower clusters appear at the crown of the plant, in contrast to the ring of flowers borne by *Mammillaria*.

California is home to one species of *Echinocactus* - *E. polycephalus* or cottontop cactus. This cluster-forming cactus



Echinocactus polycephalus; summer, above and winter, left



can be found throughout most of the

Mojave Desert and prefers a very dry habitat although it does not mind the cold and grows up to 4800 feet elevation.

Echinocereus (Hedgehog cactus) produce one of the most beautiful flowers. California deserts are home to two species of *Echinocereus* (*E. engelmannii* and *E. triglochidiatus*). They have a wide range and occur in both the Mojave and Colorado Deserts. If you see a large mound of cactus with a flower bearing a green stigma, you are looking at an *Echinocereus*.

Ferocactus cylindraceus (California barrel cactus) grows profusely throughout a large swath of eastern California and southern Nevada. They are extremely adaptable, growing from sea level to 5200 feet, and are able to tolerate temperatures up to 150 deg. F. *Ferocactus* have a long blooming period during May and June. They have an interesting adaptation whereby they produce nectar that contains 20 different amino acids, as well as fructose, sucrose, and glucose. This rich nectar comes not from the cactus flowers but from extrafloral nectary glands which are located in



Echinocereus triglochidiatus

the areoles. The nectar attracts ants in a mutualistic relationship. The ants obtain nectar and moisture from barrel cactus; in turn, fighting ants give the cactus protection from herbivorous insects. The nutrients in nearby ant nests provide the cactus with a perpetual source of fertilizer. With age *F. cylindraceus* become columnar and can reach over five feet tall.

Mammillaria dioica and *Mammillaria tetrancistra* are California's two Mamm. species. *M. dioica* has an unusual range in that it grows along the coast from San Diego south throughout Baja California, but it also thrives in in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park from 1000 to over 3000 feet elevation. *M. tetrancistra* grows throughout southeastern California. It is usually solitary but can grow into tight clumps. It has large rose-purple flower up to 1.5 inches across and produces juicy, bright red fruits.

The final California native cactus is the rare and beautiful *Sclerocactus polyancistrus* (Mojave fishhook cactus). This solitary, shaggy-spined cactus has spectacular magenta flowers up to 2 in. across with a spicy fragrance from April to June. It makes its home in the heart of the Mojave Desert.

Collection of native species from habitat is NOT recommended. Most species are harvest regulated (a permit is required) and unauthorized collection can earn a stiff fine.

Reference: Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada; Stephen Ingram

Yvonne Hemenway, February 2014

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH —

California Native Succulents

CALIFORNIA native succulents can be found in many of our wide-ranging Pacific climates, from the Mojave desert to alpine Sierra slopes, and from Mediterranean climates (close kin to southern Africa's Western Cape) to foggy coastal & island hills and meadows. Many of our California natives make excellent garden and container subjects, and seedlings are widely available at club shows and sales—sometimes even from home & garden centers. I'm not here to tell you to stop coveting exotic succulents from Africa, Madagascar, and the island of Socotra. But while

you're at it, why not carve out some space for our own home-grown succulent treasures?

CRASSULACEAE

Dudleya

By sheer number of species, extent of its range, and diversity of climates, the genus *Dudleya* is the superstar of California native succulents. Besides must-have *Dudleya brittonii* (Baja California), many other dudleyas are excellent candidates for the home grower. Grow them for their frosty tomentum, the waxy powder naturally coating the leaves like a powdered donut. Many growers report better luck planting the crown at an angle rather than vertical, to help water run out of the crown.

Most *Dudleyas* do not look their best during summer, especially if watered and fed heavily during hot, dry summer months. Summer watering can kill some *Dudleyas*. They are most attractive during the normal rainy months of the winter and early spring.

Here is a short list of *Dudleyas* seen locally in cultivation. Like most specialty succulents, *Dudleya* species go in an out of production, and some types are quite uncommon even from small, specialized growers.



Dudleya pulverulenta

Dudleya attenuata *Dudleya caespitosa*

Dudleya cymosa *Dudleya edulis*

Dudleya farinosa "Bluff Lettuce"

Dudleya gnoma "Munchkin Live-forever" Forms very ornamental clumps of tiny white rosettes.

Dudleya hassei "Catalina Island Live-Forever"

Dudleya lanceolata "Lanceleaf Live-Forever"

Dudleya pachyphytum "Cedros Island Live-forever" from off the coast of Baja California. Stunning, sought-after and (I find) somewhat touchy to grow. One of the few dudleyas that rival *Dudleya brittonii* in overall appeal.

Dudleya palmeri

Dudleya pulverulenta “Chalk Liveforever”
Dudleya traskiae “Santa Barbara Liveforever”
Dudleya ‘Frank Reinelt’

See also: <http://crassulaceae.net/dudleyamenu/72-speciesdudleya/224-dudleya-part-5-list-of-species>

Also in *Crassulaceae*, California boasts some *Sedum* species well suited to containers and garden accents:

Sedum divergens *Sedum lanceolatum*
Sedum laxum heckneri *Sedum niveum*
Sedum oreganum *Sedum spathulifolium*

AGAVOIDEAE

From the Mojave Desert, consider adopting a nursery-grown seedling of our own, endemic Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*). Only the saguaro can rival the Joshua tree to evoke the desert. Unfortunately, cuttings do not grow reliably—it’s best to grow a seedling. Even then, your seedlings won’t reach their full potential in one human lifetime. But half the pleasure of gardening is our plants’ story, and the Joshua tree’s story is unrivaled.

Besides other desert yuccas, California also has more succulent *Agavoideae*, including 3 native *Agave* species. All of these are worth growing.



Iconic Mojave Desert plant - *Yucca brevifolia* ssp. *jaegeriana*

Agave utahensis. This striking miniature lives in arid Nevada and Utah mountains. Known California populations are limited to the Nopah Range in Inyo County. Now plentiful in the trade, you should grow at least one *Agave utahensis*—maybe 3–5 if you have room. Woody leaf margins and long terminal spines vary by individual, so you really should have more than one. They sometimes branch to form offsets at the base. Because of its manageable size and formidable presence, *Agave utahensis* is a frequent show entry (and winner) in its category.



Agave utahensis var. *nevadensis*

Agave deserti. This desert agave typically shows colors in the blue, gray and silver range and makes a medium-large container or garden statement. It offsets to form familiar patches of rosettes, each composed of sharp, spine-tipped, sword-shaped leaves.

Agave shawii. This coastal agave also forms patches of armed, green rosettes 2 to 3 feet tall.

ASTERACEAE

Coreopsis gigantea “Giant Coreopsis”. Often gets a second look in my backyard. The tuft of leaves sprouting from the top of the naked, succulent stem can resemble a Truffula Tree from Dr Seuss’s *The Lorax*, if Truffula Trees were green. The sizable, yellow, daisy-like flowers are a bonus, but I grow this plant for its odd form.

Dean Elzinga, February 2014



Thank you to Yvonne Hemenway and Dean Elzinga for putting together the Plant of the Month articles. 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.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 8, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, Room 101, Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego.

Wednesday, February 19, 7:30 pm — Workshop, PLANT IDENTIFICATION. Palm Room of the LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia.

March 28, 29 9:00 am to 5:00 pm **and March 30**, 12:00 to 4:00 pm — Orange County Cactus and Succulent Society Spring Show & Sale at Anaheim United Methodist Church, 1000 S. State College Blvd., Anaheim, CA. For more information call 562-587-3357.

March 29 and 30, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — The Prickly Palace Open Gardens and Plant Sale in the Hemenway gardens, 5890 Grinnell Drive, Riverside, 92509. Call Buck Hemenway at 951-360-8802 for more information.

April 12 and 13, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Show & Sale at the South Coast Botanic Garden, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA. For information call 310-378-1953

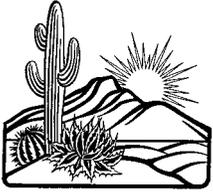
April 19 and 20, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — Green Scene plant sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton, CA 92831

April 27, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm — Huntington Spring Plant Sale at the Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. For more information call 626-405-2160.



2014 Plant-of-the-Month and Study Group Topics

	<u>Cacti of the Month</u>	<u>Succulent of the Month</u>	<u>Workshops</u>
Jan.	Mammillaria Clusters	Succulent Bulbs	Landscaping with Succulents
Feb.	California Native Cacti	California Native Succulents	Plant Identification
Mar.	Rebutia, Sulcorebutia, Weingartia	Echeverias	California Natives
Apr.	Variegated Cacti	Variegated Succulents	Spring Seed Workshop
May	Gymnocalycium	Stem Euphorbias	Vegetative Propagation
June	Notocactus and Parodia	Bursera & Commiphora	Stem Euphorbias
July	Crested and Monstrose	Crested and Monstrose	Staging Workshop
Aug.	Favorite Cactus	Favorite Succulent	Crests and Monstrose
Sept.	Cephaliated Cacti	Monadenium	Succulent Orchids
Oct.	Ariocarpus	Sedums	Sansevierias
Nov.	Grafted Cacti	Grafted Succulents	Winter Seed Workshop



COMMUNIQUE

Newsletter of the San Gabriel Valley
Cactus and Succulent Society
c/o Yvonne Hemenway
5890 Grinnell Drive
Riverside, CA 92509

FIRST CLASS MAIL

If you have a cactus or succulent related event that you would like to have announced in the **COMMUNIQUE**, forward the information to the address below. Please verify the event date. Articles, Notices and Corrections can be sent via email to: yvonne@pricklypalace.com or via mail to: San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Newsletter Editor, c/o Yvonne Hemenway, 5890 Grinnell Drive, Riverside, CA 92509. Material must be received by the last Thursday of the month to be considered for publication in the next issue of the **COMMUNIQUE**.