



## ***San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society***

# **COMMUNIQUE**

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

January 2015 - Volume 48, Number 1

### **January Meeting: Thursday, January 8 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:**  
***Mammillaria Clusters***

**SUCCULENT:**  
**Agaves**

### **Study Group:**

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

***Mammillaria***

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### ***President's Message***

Happy Holidays! I hope you are having a joyous holiday season.

Special thanks go to everyone who made our holiday party such a wonderful event. As usual, the food was delicious and plentiful, and the time shared with our friends made for a delightful evening. I am always amazed how well Mary Brumbaugh and Rebecca Mallonee organize and coordinate such a large, successful event. Congratulations! The jazz combo added a nice touch to the night's festivities. Dinner was followed by a smoothly-run auction due to our very capable auctioneers, Buck Hemenway and Peter Walkowiak.

We welcome the new 2015 SGVCSS Board and Directors: Gunnar Eisel, president, Horace Birgh, vice president, Louise Guerin, secretary, and Margie Wilson, treasurer. The 2015 directors will be Shaun Adams, Dean Elzinga, and Louise Stack.

We look forward to Karen Ostler as our January 8th speaker. She will be speaking on one of her many specialties, Mammillarias. Also, at our January 21st C&S workshop, we will discuss Mammillarias. Please join us.

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## **Study Group**

### **Wednesday, January 21st • Mammillaria**

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.

## **President's Message** (cont. from page 1)

2015 will be an extraordinary year for SGVCSS. We and the Gates C&S Society will be hosting the 2015 Cactus and Succulent Society of America Biennial Convention at Pitzer College. We will be asking for everyone's help in making this the best CSSA Convention ever. The year 2015 also brings the **30th** Annual Inter-city Show. We'll be pulling out all the stops to make these events special and memorable.

See you at the January 8th meeting.

Gunnar Eisel

## **Refreshment Signup**

**Rosie Garcia**  
**Yvonne Hemenway**  
**Fred Parrales**

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.

**Dave Johnson, Duarte**  
**Wayne Klein, Valencia**



Be sure to take a look at the Club's website at [www.sgvcss.com](http://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](mailto:yvonne@pricklypalace.com).

## **This Month's Program**

### **Mammillaria Clusters**

I have always been interested in plants; growing house plants in my teens. In the late 1970's I discovered cactus and on one fateful camping trip in 1979, passed a house on a desert road with greenhouses in the back. When we stopped, the man was friendly and showed me the plants. I rode home with a shoebox full of little white golf balls.

The first time I went to an Inter-city Show, I spent the entire Saturday there and returned on Sunday. I thought I had died and gone to heaven. I have been hooked ever since.

I am a member of CSSA and five other local societies; Central Coast, Gates, Los Angeles, San Gabriel and Sunset. I served as Sunset's Show chair for several years and was co-chair for the CSSA Show.

Since moving to the San Gabriel Mountains, my participation has lessened but I still am focused on growing the best cactus that I possibly can, mainly Mammillarias.

Mammillarias are the cactus nearly everyone starts with, there are species that are easy to grow well and there are species that are far more challenging. I love them all.

Karen Ostler

**Club Bulletin Board****Holiday Party, 2014**

*Thank you Gunnar for arranging the evening's entertainment at the Holiday Party. These musicians were great!*

*Club president Gunnar Eisel and Roberta welcomed over 100 guests to the festivities.*



*Took us a while to identify this well-dressed gentleman and his lady. Mark Muradian and Patty.*



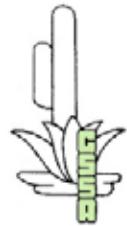
*A gourmet feast was enjoyed by all. From appetizers to desserts and everything in between.*

***Thanks to all who brought the potluck items that made the dinner so special.***



*Some of the special auction items offered at one of the best Holiday Party auctions ever. Thanks to auctioneers Buck Hemenway and Peter Walkowiak with assistance from Rob Roy MacGregor and Shaun Adams.*

*Note the selection of pots offered by Mary Brumbaugh. (They are going to South Africa with Yvonne Hemenway)*

**CSSA CORNER**

The Huntington Botanical Gardens, in continuing cooperation with the CSSA and their affiliate clubs, once again offers the Desert Forum, a Free Day for CSSA members and members of affiliate clubs on January 18, 2015. Arrive at 9:00AM for a full day of the Huntington.

See details of the event on page 6.

**SGVC&SS LEADERSHIP TEAM - 2013**

Gunnar Eisel, President  
Buck Hemenway, Past President  
Horace Birgh, Vice President  
Margie Wilson, Treasurer  
Louise Guerin, Secretary  
Rebecca Mallonee, Director  
Mary Brumbaugh, Director

Louise Stack, Director  
Shaun Adams, Director  
Dean Elzinga, Director  
Tom Vermilion, Director  
Manny Rivera, Winter Show Chair  
John Matthews, Winter Sales Chair  
Tom Glavich, Intercity Show Chair

Jim Hanna, CSSA Affiliate Representative  
Gunnar Eisel, Website Chair  
Woody Minnich, Program Chair  
Mary Brumbaugh, Membership Chair  
Cindy Arakaki, Librarian  
Yvonne Hemenway, Newsletter Editor

## Plants Of The Month

Enter your specimen plants in our monthly mini-show. 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 —

#### *Mammillaria Clusters*

First described as *Cactus mammillaris*, and illustrated in 1697 by Commelin and the only cactus known to Linnaeus; *Mammillaria mammillaris*, serves as the lectotype for the genus. The genus is further divided into, depending on author; about 12 to 21 subgenus'. These subgenus break down based on the spines, flowering, growth habit, and seed style, into more manageable units. The genus overall is characterized by raised tubercles topped by spines and by the flowering, typically a circle of flowers in a crown or necklace around the body of the plant. *Mammillarias* are one of the largest; although not the largest; genus of cacti.



*M. bocasana*, typical growth habit.

The flower color varies from white, *M. albiflora* (subgenus *Herrerae*), to pinkish yellow in *M. pulmosa* (subgenus *Proliferae*), to a stunning, deep rose violet, *M. guelowziana* (subgenus *Phellosperma*). Flower size also varies from the tiny *M. klissingiana*, to the relatively large *M. booli*.

Spines are also quite variable from the delicate white dots of *M. leuthyi* to the long *M. geminispina*, and run the gamut of soft, *M. pulmosa* to the nasty hooked spines of *M. magnifica*. Spine color ranges from the pure white of *M. hahniana* (subgenus *Leucocephalae*) through to the bronze of *M. elongata* (subgenus *Leptocladodae*) to the black of *M. thornberi* ssp. *yaquensis* (subgenus *Chilita*.)

They grow from central North America; *M. tetrancistra* (subgenus *Ancistracantheae*) into Utah

and Neveda; down through Mexico, Central America and into South America, *M. columbiana* (subgenus *Supertextae*) into Columbia and Venezuela. And even now new species are being discovered and described.



*M. geminispina* in the Hemenway garden.

*Mammillarias* are one of the first cacti encountered and grown by novice growers. They are fairly easy to grow and are quite rewarding. As with all cacti, they do not appreciate being cold and damp, but other than that they have few demands.

White spined *Mammillarias* require higher light levels than those with darker or fewer spines, to maintain the dense spination and the white color.

Clustering *Mammillarias* occur through most of the subgenus' and range in size from the tiny *M. hernandezii* (subgenus *Longiflorae*) to *M. compressa* (subgenus *Polyedrae*). Most offset readily from the base of the plant when young and with age will offset all along the plant body.

Care of *Mammillarias* is quite easy. They appreciate a well draining substrate; consisting of pumice and potting soil (or coir), I prefer a higher content of pumice to soil. Fertilizing is recommended from April to September with a balanced fertilizer, and slightly acidic water (7 ph). To maintain pristine spine formation, do not water from overhead.

*Mammillarias* should be potted up on a regular basis to prevent uneven growth or if preferred may be kept stunted by regularly repotting in fresh soil and being returned to the same size pot. But the clustering *Mammillarias* can form absolutely stunningly massive mounds that can be used to good effect in landscaping, and are beautiful in a large pot *Mammillaria pringlei* growing in the Hemenway garden.



although they can be difficult to manage.

#### Recommended reading:

- Anderson, E., The Cactus Family
  - Craig, R. T., The Mammillaria Handbook
  - Hunt, D., The New Cactus Lexicon
  - Pilbeam, J., Mammillaria
- Karen Ostler, January 2014

#### SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH —

##### *Agave*

*Agave* is a large genus with succulent leaves. They range in size from miniature plants such as *A. minutissima* to giants like *A. americana* and *A. salmiana* which have rosettes that are nearly 15 feet across.

There are several ways to identify an *Agave*. 1. Their leaves are always tipped with a terminal spine. Even the soft tipped *A. attenuata*, has an obvious terminal spine. 2. The leaves are formed in a tightly wrapped bud. There is so much pressure in the bud that those leaves with “teeth” leave permanent bud imprints on the leaf fronts and backs. 3. Leaves tend to be fairly rigid and grow in rosette form.

*Agaves* are “monocarpic” which means that they have only one life cycle. No matter how long it takes for the plant to produce it, the bloom stalk is a terminal inflorescence. That means that the plant dies after blooming. The bloom stalk can be produced anywhere from 7 years to 40 years, depending on growing conditions and the species of the plant.

*Agaves* grow in the Southwest US and on some Caribbean Islands, south through Mexico. They were an important resource for all peoples who lived on the land throughout history. The extremely fibrous leaves with the very sharp terminal spines have always been used to sew or bind other materials together. Their roots make good soap. They all will produce a fermented beverage that was used throughout their range. We are most familiar with Tequila which is derived from the *Agave tequilana* in the state of

Jalisco, Mexico.

Some, such as *Agave americana*, are cold hardy to below zero deg F. Depending on the variety, they tend to offset and form large clumps of plant material. It is important to know which species you are planting and how it normally grows. Most will take full sun and heat, as well as cold and are extremely easy to grow.



*Agave angustifolia*

There is no more dramatic landscape plant than a large *Agave*. It can become the key to an attractive succulent landscape. The inflorescence is truly a wonder of nature. The energy used to create those 25 foot tall stalks in just a few weeks is amazing. While most of them will not reproduce from seed naturally in our area, one can only marvel at the tens of thousands of seeds produced by one mother plant.

Buck Hemenway, January 2015



*Agave* cultivar "Blue Glow"



Thank you to Karen Ostler and Buck Hemenway 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](mailto:tglavich@sbcglobal.net).



Our Holiday Plant for 2014 was *Tylecodon paniculata*, native to the Western Cape area of South Africa. It will grow into a short tree (up to 7 feet tall) in the ground, densely branched with a rounded crown. During the hot, dry season (May-July), *Tylecodon paniculata* produces a tall inflorescence with bright red flowers and their leaves wither and fall off, reappearing in the fall. They prefer to be kept very dry throughout the summer.

*Tylecodon paniculata* is an attractive treasure for any succulent collection.

*Buck and Yvonne Hemenway  
saw this splendid specimen of  
*Tylecodon paniculata* in the  
Richtersveld, South Africa.*



## **DESERT FORUM**

Saturday, 17 January 2015

### **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

#### **9:00 – 11:00 A.M.      Registration**

Table for sign in will be outside temporary entrance. Bring your club badge or card to help speed up sign in.

#### **9:00 – 11:00 Noon      Desert Garden**

Knowledgeable staff will be stationed throughout the Desert Garden and Desert Conservatory. Many species of Aloes will be flowering.

#### **11:00 – 1:00 P.M.      Plant Sales**

Desert Nursery opens for sales and browsing at 11:00 P.M.  
Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted

#### **Lunch**

The Rose Garden Café features a variety of sandwiches and grilled items  
The tea room at Liu Fang Yuan is a lovely option for fresh Chinese food

#### **1:00 – 4:30 P.M.      Free Time**

Attendees are welcome to tour the other gardens and galleries after 10:30.

## **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

**Saturday, January 17**, 9:30 am to 4:30 pm — DESERT FORUM at the Huntington Botanical Gardens. CSSA members and affiliate clubs are invited to a free day at the Desert Garden including a tour with knowledgeable staff, plant sale, and forum led by Director of the Gardens, Jim Folsom. Wear your name badge!

**Wednesday, January 21**, 7:30 pm — Workshop, MAMMILLARIA. Palm Room of the LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia.

**Saturday, February 7**, 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.

**Saturday, February 14**, 9:30 am - 11:00 am — 13th Annual ALOE WALK at the Jurupa Mountain Discovery Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA. Phone 951-685-5818 for directions. The 6-acre succulent gardens at the Center were planted by local succulent enthusiasts in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Buck Hemenway will lead the tour among the many specimens of blooming aloes and discuss their wide ranging natural habitats and how they survive in our Inland Empire climate. This event is Free.

**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.

**\*\* Note \*\* Membership Dues are Due!** Your 2015 Club membership renewal can be paid at the next meeting or mailed direct to Mary Brumbaugh, 2123 Pinehurst St., Glendora, CA 91741. \$15 regular membership or \$25 if you request the Communiqué by mail. Checks to **SGVCSS**.

### **2015 Plant-of-the-Month and Study Group Topics**

<b>Cacti of the Month</b>		<b>Succulent of the Month</b>	<b>Workshops</b>
Jan.	Mammillaria Clusters	Agave	Mammillaria
Feb.	Coryphantha, Escobaria	African Crassulaceae	Tips, Tools and Techniques
Mar.	Opuntioideae	Haworthia	Haworthia
Apr.	Eriosyce, Copiapoa	Dudleya, Echeveria	Spring Seed Workshop
May	Echinocereus	Pachypodium	Vegetative Propagation
June	Echinocactus, Ferocactus, Thelocactus	Gasteria	Echinocereus
July	Astrophytum	Lithops	Staging Workshop
Aug.	Favorite Cactus	Favorite Succulent	Monadenium
Sept.	Turbinicarpus, Pediocactus, Sclerocactus	Asclepiads	Pests
Oct.	Ariocarpus	Sansevieria	Sansevieria
Nov.	Variegates	Variegates	Winter Seed Workshop

## **2015 CSSA Convention**

**at Pitzer College**

**June 14 – 19, 2015**

Almost 4 years ago, your Board of Directors voted unanimously to combine forces with San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society and invite the Cactus World to our Inland Empire for the biennial Convention of the CSSA. This will be the 36th Convention stretching back to the 1930's.

Every 2 years the Cactus & Succulent crazies in North America get together to put on an extravaganza of succulent knowledge exchange. We invite the premiere authors and speakers from the world-over to give us their best knowledge of their favorite succulent plant genres. Just the chance to have lunch with Ernst Van Jaarsveld, Kelly Griffin, Len Newton, Heidi Hartmann, or to listen to them expound on some plant topic is worth the chance for every succulent nut.

It is incumbent on our two clubs to host an event that both is pleasing for the participants and interesting as well. The planning for this event has been ongoing for more than 3 years.

- We have an extremely interesting location
- We have speakers invited and confirmed
- We have Field Trips planned
- We have an Auction ready to go.
- There will be a huge plant sale
- The final sale of bookseller Chuck Everson
- Opening Banquet at the Huntington

Pitzer College presents an extremely interesting venue at which to host this event. The cost of attending a Convention has risen fast over the last 20 years. By going to Pitzer, we have made an effort to reduce the overall cost to the attendee. In addition, for those who have been on campus in the last few years, you'll know that it is now one of the premier display sites for succulent plants in Southern California. Our succulent friends from around the country will be blown away.

So, how do you, a member of the host club get involved? Two ways – pay the registration like any other member of CSSA or VOLUNTEER to help put on the show. Volunteers (active members of the 2 host clubs) who will commit to at least 10 hours of service in the planning or execution of the event will be able to attend the lectures free of charge.

We are looking for people to head various committees. They include:

**Security**

**Auction**

**Closing Banquet**

**Room Assignment, check in and check out**

**Opening Reception**

**Welcome Bags - Eunice Thompson (San Gabrial)**

**Printed Program, Execution and Advertising Sales - Isabelle Moon (Gates)**

**Registration**

Please see me at the next meeting if you have interest in heading any of the committees listed.

Buck Hemenway