

**San Gabriel Valley
Cactus & Succulent Society**

COMMUNIQUE

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

May 2014 - Volume 47, Number 5

**May Meeting:
Thursday,
May 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:

Gymnocalycium

SUCCULENT:

Stem Euphorbias

C&S Workshop:

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

Vegetative Propagation

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President's Message

We're all very excited to have Attila Kapitany as our May 8th speaker. His topic will be "The Future of Succulents in Garden Design" Don't miss this one. I can't wait!

Attila is immediate past president of the Cactus & Succulent Society of Australia with 10 years in this position, and is also currently editor of its journal.

Our field trip to the San Diego summer show is on June 7th. Currently we do not have any seats available. If there is a cancellation, I will send out an e-mail.

Our April Spring seed workshop was very successful. Special thanks go to Tom Glavich for leading the workshop and everyone who participated in helping to make this a good learning experience. Thanks also go to Dick Tatman and Tony Moreno for seeds they donated for the workshop. The May 21st workshop will be on Vegetative Propagation. We hope to see you there. Also, the SGVCSS board meeting will be before the workshop. Details will be announced at the May 8th meeting.



Manny Rivera and Tom Vermillion selecting seeds from among the many varieties offered at last month's Workshop

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April Mini-Show Results

Cactus - Variegated

Novice

1st Tricia Kangrga *Opuntia ficus-indica*
variegata

Intermediate

1st Glen & Linda Carlzen *Oreocereus celsianus*

Masters

1st Tom Glavich *Chimera Myrtillocactus x*
Gymnocalycium friedreichii

Succulent - Variegated

Novice

1st Albert Guritza *Aloe nobilis*
2nd Shaun Adams *Ledebouria sociales*
2nd Tricia Kangrga *Haworthia reinwardtii*
variegata
3rd Fred Parrales *Sanseveria hainie*
3rd Albert Guritza *Gasteria marmorata*

Intermediate

1st David Hawks *Aechmea recurvata*
2nd Tom Howard *Agave isthmensis* var. dwarf
3rd Tom Howard *Agave gypsophila* var.
3rd Tom Howard *Agave schidigera* 'Shira Ito
No Ohi'
3rd David Hawks *Agave victoria-reginae*

Masters

1st Tom Glavich *Gasteria x armstrongii*
2nd Rita Gerlach *Gasteria pulchra* variegated
3rd Rita Gerlach *Gasteria nigricans marmorata*

Mini-Show Judges Signup

Sharon Sidillo and Fred Parrales signed up to assist Head Judge Manny Rivera in judging the entries for this month's Mini-Show.

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)

Finally it is not too early to get your plants ready to enter in the CSSA Show and Sale June 27th to 29th. Barbara Hall will be at the meeting to distribute name tags. If you wear your club badge and the name tag you will be able to attend the show without paying the Huntington admission fee.

See you at the meeting.

Gunnar Eisel

This Month's Program

"The Future of Succulents in Garden Design"

Attila Kapitany

The mind tends to limit succulents to a particular style and yet imaginative garden designers have in recent years explored the possibilities like never before. Join me on an almost unbelievable visual treat. Who would have thought that succulents could ever be made to look soft and luxuriant in the garden, mixing succulents with annuals, spring bulbs and under roses?



Also why are succulents popular? You'll be surprised at my ideas and findings....

Some say succulents are a fad that's going to fade ... I'll prove them wrong!

Attila is a succulent expert and author of many popular books on the subject will be along with pictures to show, and knowledge to share. Get an autographed copy of some of his publications.



Attila is immediate past president of the Cactus & Succulent Society of Australia with 10 years in this position, and is also currently editor of its journal.

He has thirty years of experience growing and marketing cacti and succulents. Attila is also a prominent member of the Horticultural Media in Australia, writing regularly in magazines, journals and newspapers and promoting succulent plants.

He was co-founder and developer of the well-known Collectors Corner and Paradisia nurseries, where his interests focused on the breeding, cultivating and marketing of rare and unusual plants. He has travelled extensively to plant habitats around the world and had amassed possibly one of the largest collections of (mostly seed-raised) plants in Australia. Also, Attila has co-written seven books with Rudolf Schulz about succulents, with an eighth book a solo effort on Australian native species. His newest publications are a series of seven booklets on xerophytic Australia plants.

Since 2007 Attila has dedicated much of his time and resources to promoting our lesser known Australian succulent plants, touring the Australian speaking circuit regularly and featuring on television and radio.



C&S Workshop

Wednesday, May 21st • Vegetative Propagation

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.

Review of March-April 2014 CSSA Journal

by Tim Harvey

Imagine a flower that provides its own perch for visiting birds. That may be what the stretch of empty inflorescence, at the tip of *Aloe ribauensis* inflorescences, is for. This new species, described by McCoy, Rulkens & Baptista features on the cover of the Journal vol. 86-2.

This volume is always eagerly awaited, for it also contains this year's listing of plants offered by International Succulent Introductions, in the article by John Trager.

Duke Benadom's Superb Succulents features two species which are pretty high on the wish-list of most collectors; one is even available from ISI this year.

Peter Breslin and Davide Donati provide a detailed look at one of Baja's rarer and little known Opuntia, *Corynopuntia robertsii*. It has been speculated that this plant is of hybrid origin, but you will have to decide for yourself.

Happily, travelling and working in Uganda is much safer than it has been in decades past, which enabled Tom Forrest to describe a new species, *Sansevieria newtoniana*, in honor of Prof. Len Newton.



Finally, *Opuntia diploursina*, a new species from the Arizona-Nevada border, is described by Stock, Hussey & Beckstrom. Its name derives from the fact that it resembles the shaggy *Opuntia ursina*, but has double the number of chromosomes.

SGVC&SS LEADERSHIP TEAM - 2014

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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 —

Gymnocalycium

Gymnocalycium are among the most popular of cacti, from the novice through the advanced grower. They are easy to grow; flower readily; come in a large number of distinguishable species; look great in flower, in bud, and even when dormant. A well grown plant will often flower several times during the year.

Gymnocalycium is an old genus, first named in 1845. The genus is named for the naked (spineless) calyx (the outermost covering of the bud and lower flower). Most cacti have spines on the calyx. Many *Gymnocalycium* are also readily identified by their 'chins' beneath the areoles.

The heart of the genus *Gymnocalycium* is in Argentina, although the genus stretches into Southeastern Bolivia, Western Paraguay, Uruguay, and into the southernmost part of Brazil. For the most part *Gymnocalycium* are grassland plants, growing and shaded in the grass of the Pampa and Chaco (dry forest) that covers much of Argentina. As a result, most like some protection from full afternoon sun, but need bright light during the day.

Gymnocalycium cultivation is easy. They need a dry rest during the winter; they can take Southern California climate without winter heat, as long as they are dry. *Gymnocalycium* will shrink noticeably in the fall as they go dormant. When this happens watering should stop, and the plants given some protection from rain. They should be fed regularly with a weak general purpose fertilizer when growing. They are tolerant of any well drained soil, but constant wet will cause the roots



Gymnocalycium bueneckii

to rot. Fortunately, they are easy to re-root, with roots generally re-growing in a just few months. Watering should start slowly in the spring, with no fertilizer until the plant is again turgid and growing. Over fertilization and too much water early in the growing season can cause the stems to split.



Gymnocalycium horrida flower

Gymnocalycium are easy to grow from seed, started in a well drained, damp potting mix in a plastic bag covered pot. Germination is fairly rapid, but growth during the first year is slow compared to most *Mammillaria* and many other genera. Vegetative propagation is also easy. Offsets from clumps can be removed, left to dry for a few days and potted. They generally root within a few weeks.

All the species and all the varieties and forms of *Gymnocalycium* are worth growing.

Great Gymnos:

Gymnocalycium baldianum, has few spines, clumps readily and grows quickly.

Gymnocalycium bueneckeri has great flowers, as can be seen in the picture and good, colorful spines. It clumps and is quick to grow.

Gymnocalycium damsii is small clustering species. The stems are brownish green, and heavily marked, with the *Gymnocalycium* chin very evident. It produces bright pink flowers almost continuously during the year.

Gymnocalycium erinaceum is a dark green clustering species. It has short, dense spines, which are dark brown as they leave the gray-white areole, and then fade near the end to the same color as the areole wool. It makes for a very handsome appearance.

Gymnocalycium friedrichii is sometimes combined with *G. mihanovichii*, and sometimes kept as a separate species. It is an extremely popular species, and easily grown. The ribs are very prominent, and sharp. The body is a dark reddish brown, banded when young. There are a number of readily distin-

guished varieties and cultivars available. *G. mihanovichii* tends to be greener. *G. mihanovichii* is the source of the “red caps” seen in many garden centers and plant sales. These are chlorophyll-less and variegated forms, that must be grafted onto a green stock plant.

Gymnocalycium pflanzii has short spines. The body color varies from green (in the spring) to shades of purple and brown (during the summer and winter)



Gymnocalycium pflanzii

Gymnocalycium pungens is a spectacular species that becomes columnar with age. There are various forms, with the one shown having excellent spination. It pays to look for a good specimen.

Tom Glavich, May 2014

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH —

Stem Euphorbias

Euphorbias are not cacti. This is one of the first stories we learn as enthusiasts. Cactus & cactus-like euphorbias are two groups exhibiting some of Nature’s most striking and clear-cut examples of convergent evolution or development, where two independent populations develop surprisingly similar features even though they are only distantly related.

Euphorbias have spines, like cactus. At least some of them do. And many of our favorite stem euphorbias are like cactus in other ways as well.

The focus this month is stem euphorbias, storing extra water and energy in their fleshy bodies. Stem euphorbias developed this succulent lifestyle to inhabit niches where water was scarce or unpredictable. A firm annual schedule like many other plants (growing and reproducing sexually like clockwork every year, expecting a fixed rainy season); this strategy would not survive long in the xeric lands where most cactus and stem-succulent euphorbia species make a living.

Popular succulent euphorbias come mostly from southern and eastern Africa and Madagascar, but many

favorites also come from Asia and the Americas.

In fact the category this month, stem euphorbias, may not be a “good” category at all—if by good we mean monophyletic, capturing a single, closely related sub-group of genus *Euphorbia*. The entire genus *Euphorbia* is teeming with examples of relatively distant relatives developing similar morphology—shape or form. Stem succulence is a prime example of morphological convergence. This pattern of convergence resurfaces all over the plant kingdom, as organisms compete to fill ecological niches where they fit the best, in other words where they are the fittest. (This was Darwin’s original meaning for the word, rather than our contemporary understanding, meaning the most robust.)

The go-to references for these plants are the 10 volumes “Euphorbia Journal” series (LaFon et al., 1983–1997).



Euphorbia baioensis

The International Euphorbia Society (IES) has begun publishing a new journal called Euphorbia World.

Euphorbia stenoclada. Silver thicket of fabled stands in Madagascar. My favorite forms resemble razor wire; others are more blunt like *E tirucalli*.

Euphorbia opuntioides. Named for its supposed resemblance to genus *Opuntia*.

Euphorbia gymnocalycioides. Another supposed resemblance, to cactus genus *Gymnocalycium*.

Euphorbia actinoclada S.Carter. This sprawling shrublet with stems like long, thick fingers, has attractive coloring, meandering curves, and angled spines.



Euphorbia abyssinica J.F.Gmel.
A favorite of the large candelabra forms.

Euphorbia unispina. *Euphorbia venefica*. *Euphorbia poissonii*. These small, silver-stemmed plants sprout more or less ephemeral leaves from the top-knot.

Euphorbia sepulta. I killed mine. I'm still bitter.

Euphorbia pillansii

Euphorbia stellispina. Star-tipped spines gave this plant its name. It makes a rewarding captive...er, pet. Mine is captured from Don Nuzzo, who grew it from seed before this plantsman passed away recently.

Euphorbia milii complex. I recommend you grow at least 47 varieties of these spiny—or are these actually thorny?—"Crown of Thorns"

Euphorbia croizatii. *E hofstaetteri*... You get the picture. There are a lot of them in Madagascar.

Euphorbia platyclada. Every C&S grower with any love for dead-stick plants needs at least a pot full of these.

Euphorbia atrispina. *Euphorbia heptagona*. *Euphorbia ferox*. These modest shrublets native to South Africa can make attractive specimens in just a few years. The black spines contrast nicely with the tidy stems in some individuals.

Euphorbia avasmontana. *Euphorbia excelsa*.

Euphorbia virosa. These statuesque trees make an architectural statement in maturity.

Euphorbia cryptospinosa. Spine shields are dense in this shrub which can grow into a modest tree.

Euphorbia weberbaueri
native to Peru

Euphorbia antisiphilitica (Candelilla). Native to Texas. Only distantly related to Old World "stick euphorbias", this pencil-thin plant secretes a thick wax, called Candelilla Wax.



Euphorbia antisiphilitica

Nurseries

<http://www.out-of-africa-plants.com> Check out their specials for \$10 and under.

<https://www.aridlands.com/> has 539 offerings listed under *Euphorbia* at time of writing.

See <http://euphorbiaceae.org/index.html> for great research unifying this clade.

See also Geoff Stein's articles on euphorbias at Dave's Garden.

Dean Elzinga, May 2014



Thank you to Tom Glavich 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.



Refreshment Signup

Carol Randall
Betty Farfan
Pat Swain
Sharon Sedillo
Joyce Spencer

The first **five** club members who sign up and bring refreshments each month will receive a **FREE** plant as thanks. This month's meeting will be packed so if any other club members can bring refreshments, it will be greatly appreciated.

Welcome New Members



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

Sadie Heitman, San Francisco
Kyle Hart, Pasadena

Calendar of Upcoming Events

May 4, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale at the South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA. For information call 310-833-6823.

May 3 and 4, — Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City. For information call 310-822-1783.

May 16 and 17, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm — Gates Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Show and Sale, at the Waterwise Garden, 450 Alessandro Blvd, Riverside, CA. (New venue!) For information call 951-360-8802.

May 17 and 18, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm — Long Beach Cactus Club Show and Sale at Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Road, Long Beach, CA. For information call 310-922-6090 or visit www.lbcss.org.

Wednesday, May 21, 7:30 pm — Workshop, VEGETATIVE PROPAGATION. Palm Room of the LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia.

May 24 and 25, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm — Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Show and Sale at the Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo, CA. For more information call 805-237-2054 or visit www.centralcoastcactus.org.

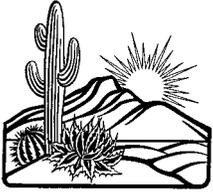
June 7 and 8, — San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Summer Show and Sale at Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego, CA. For more information call 858-382-1797.

June 14th, 9 to 5 and 15th, 9:00 to 3:30 — Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society Annual Show and Sale at the Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino, CA. For info email LACSS.Contact@gmail.com.

June 27 - 29, 10:30 am to 4:30 pm — Cactus & Succulent Society of America Annual Show and Sale at the Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. Dinner and auction on June 29th, reservations required.

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
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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**.