



*San Gabriel Valley
Cactus & Succulent Society*

COMMUNIQUE

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

November 2010 - Volume 44, Number 11

**November Meeting:
Thursday,
November 11 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 —
Opuntia**

**SUCCULENT—
Asclepiad**

**Holiday Party - December 5th
in Ayers Hall (see page 6)**

Study Group:

Study group will meet on Wednesday,
November 17th in the Palm Room,
Los Angeles County Arboretum at
7:30 pm. The topic will be:

**Winter Seed
Workshop**

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President's Message

Nominations are in for 2011 officers. Please check the slate later in this newsletter. You will be asked to vote, at the meeting, to suspend part of our bylaws for the election. Just so everyone knows, I am fine with the motion.

The date for our annual Holiday Party Dinner is changed. It will be Sunday, December 5. See additional details. Tommy will need volunteers to cook turkeys (we'll bring one) hams etc. Please let him know at the meeting or call him.

It's not just me. I had numerous complaints at the board meeting about the continual noise (conversations) in the back of the room while we are trying to get our announcements out to the membership. Please give Horace your attention at the upcoming meeting. The room will be overfull, it is not going to be easy for anyone.

Your Board of Directors has voted to form a committee to present a proposal to the CSSA to host the biennial convention in conjunction with Gates C&SS at Pitzer College in June 2015. You'll hear more about this in the near future, but we need to present a proposal to the Affiliates Meeting at the CSSA convention in San Diego in April. Anyone interested in being on the committee should let me know. We'll try to get started with formative meetings in January.

We've set the date for our spring bus trip as April 2. We'll go to Santa Barbara Botanical Gardens and two or three nurseries.

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October Mini-Show Results

Cacti - Ariocarpus

Novice

1st	Hannah Nguyen	A. fissuratus
2nd	Alan delCastillo	A. retusus v. furfuraceus
3rd	Louise Stack	A. retusus

Intermediate

1st	Barbara Nolan	A. retusus
2nd	Glen/Linda Carlzen	A. fissuratus
3rd	Jean Mullens	A. kotschoubeyanus
3rd	Rita Gerlach	A. retusus

Master

1st	John Matthews	A. retusus
2nd	Rene Caro	A. retusus
3rd	Tom Glavich	A. fissuratus

Succulents - Sansevieria

Novice

1st	Hannah Nguyen	S. kirkii v. pulchra
2nd	Tricia Kangrga	S. "Lillian True"
3rd	Brian Le	S. "Black Sword"
3rd	William Molina	S. suffruticosa spiral Grigsby form

Intermediate

1st	Barbara Nolan	S. trifaciata v. Moonshine
2nd	Rita Gerlach	S. singularis
3rd	Rita Gerlach	S. kirkii

Master

1st	Manny Rivera	S. trifaciata v. Moonshine
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President's Message - Continued

Jean Mullens is putting together a trip to Anza Borrego. See her or call her if you are interested.

Buck Hemenway

This Month's Program

We are delighted to welcome Debra Lee Baldwin as our speaker for November. She is an award winning garden author whose articles have appeared in Better Homes and Gardens, Sunset Magazine, San Diego Tribune among many. She began a full time love affair with succulent plants some years ago and that relationship has led to the writing and publication of two of the most popular books in the succulent world. Her *Designing with Succulents* and *Succulent Container Gardens* are among the all time best selling garden books.

Debra Lee lives in the San Diego area and we are very privileged to have her speak at our meeting. She gives a beautiful presentation, most of which is taken from the books. Debra Lee will bring a selection of her books for a great opportunity to add them to our personal libraries. Everyone, no matter how long in the hobby, will take away new ideas from the show. This is a presentation that can't be missed.

Study Group

Wednesday, November 17th • Winter 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.

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.

Club Bulletin Board

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The membership will be asked, prior to the actual election, to ratify the following statement that has been approved by the Board of Directors.

We suspend Section 6 of Article 4 of the bylaws of the San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society for the 2011 election.

The Section reads as follows: “No officer or director shall hold more than one elective office nor shall any officer be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in one office.”

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Judi Romine, presents the following slate of officers for election to the positions noted for the 2011 and 2011-12 terms. Election to be held at the November 2010 meeting.

For the **2011** calendar year:

- President: Buck Hemenway
- Vice President: Tom Vermillion
- Secretary: Pat Swain
- Treasurer: Don Muhleman

For the two year term **2011 and 2012**

- Directors: (vote for three)
- Hannah Nguyen
 - Tricia Kangrga
 - Jean Mullens

2011 SGVCSS DUES

It’s time to pay your 2001 Membership dues. All SGVCSS memberships expire December 2010 with the exception of those members who paid since July.

(Bergman, Calif. Cactus, DeChirico, Del Castillo, Elzinga, Hart, Hawks, Hsiao, Hsu, Huynh, C. Jackson, Klang, MacGregor, Nicolai-Vargas, Padilla, Perri, Plunkett, Reining, Sedillo, Trager, Villanueva, S. Williams, J. Wong, Wyler, Yonashiro and Life members.)

The dues are \$15 for e-mail or \$25 for US mail delivery of the newsletter. Dues can be mailed to SGVCSS Membership at 719 S Albertson, Covina, CA 91723 or paid at a monthly meeting. Make checks out to:

SGVCSS Membership

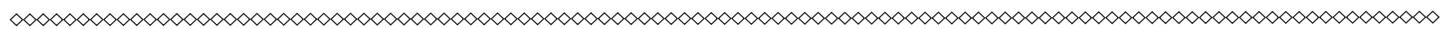
Please note any corrections, changes or exclusions you wish to make on your info as it will appear in the 2011 Roster. Call Bill Gerlach at 626-332-8008 if you have any questions.

Winter Show T-shirt honors SGVCCS Member Victor Turecek



Our Club t-shirt design for the upcoming Winter Show was chosen to honor long-time member Victor Turecek. (center).

The artwork was done by the talented Tom Glavich (left) and is proudly displayed by our Show Chair Manny Rivera (right). Be sure to get your commemorative t-shirt at a meeting or at the Show.



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 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 —

Opuntia

Cactus specimens (family *Cactaceae*) were among the plants brought to Europe after the discovery of the Americas; these plants were cultivated for a hundred or more years. By the mid-1600s, some of the cactus specimens were described and illustrated in various publications across Europe. Around the turn of the 18th century, four different cactus genera were proposed, among them, *Opuntia*.

Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, a French botanist, first published *Opuntia* as a genus in 1700. The name may be derived from the word used by the Roman historian Pliny to describe a spiny plant that grew around the Greek town of Opus. However, de Tournefort's plant descriptions were invalid (i.e., the plants were not *Opuntias*).

In 1754, Phillip Miller, an English gardener, described four cactus genera: *Cactus*, *Cereus*, *Opuntia*, and *Pereskia*. Miller's is considered the first valid plant description of *Opuntia*.

A brief digression is required. For most of the 19th century, botanists were busy identifying, describing, and naming the various *Cactaceae* specimens. It was a time of discovery, over-lapping activity, and ignorance of what others were simultaneously doing.

In 1898, Karl Schumann, a German botanist, proposed the first modern classification of *Cactacea* into subfamilies and tribes; he introduced today's accepted arrangement of three main subfamilies: *Pereskioideae*, *Opuntioideae*, and *Cactoideae* (as *Cereoideae*).



Puna bonnieae

For most of the 20th century, work continued, on describing plants and assigning them organizationally.

For roughly 200 years, the genus *Opuntia* included most of the species included in the subfamily *Opuntioideae*.

In 1984, the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study (IOS) sought a new approach to classifying the *Cactaceae*. As a result of this international work, in 1990, Hunt and Taylor published on behalf of the IOS the current classification of the *Cactaceae* into four subfamilies: *Cactaceae*, *Maihuenioideae*, *Opuntioideae*, and *Cactoideae* (divided into nine tribes). There have been subsequent "adjustments" in tribes and genera recognized by the IOS, among them *Opuntia*.

In 1998, *Opuntia* was divided into additional genera. The subfamily *Opuntioideae* now has 15 genera. However, expect the "adjustment process" to continue.



Maihueniopsis Subterrenea

Nevertheless, *Opuntia* is the most widespread genus within *Cactaceae*; *Opuntia* are distributed from southern Canada to Patagonia, and from the eastern Caribbean to the Galápagos Islands, as well as across the Andes. *Opuntia* is also one of the largest genera within *Cactaceae*, with 180+ species.

Opuntias are shrubby to treelike plants, up to 33 feet in height, some with -developed trunks. Stems are distinctly jointed, undivided, and comprised of flattened segments or cladodes (shapes: round, ovate, elliptical, cylindrical, rhomboid). Leaves are small and usually fall away early. Areoles are in the axils of the leaves, with glochids, hairs, and spines (which may or may not be absent). Usually solitary flowers are borne on the margins of the stem segments. The fruit is edible. In fact *Opuntia* have been an important food and medicinal source for indigenous peoples for centuries.

Given the widespread distribution of *Opuntia*, species that can be easily grown in our area can be readily found. These plants can be grown in pots, but are best grown in the soil. They require a sunny position, and are frost hardy in our growing area. They should be regularly watered and fertilized during their summer growing period, particularly if you want them to flower and fruit. Species from the extremes of the north-south distribution should be watered more sparingly at the beginning and end of the growing

season, to harden them. These plants do best with cold if dry.

O. ficus-indicus (some common names: prickly pear, Indian fig, mission cactus, nopal de castilla) is a shrubby to treelike plant, reaching 20 feet in height. It is probably native to Mexico, although it has been so hybridized by native peoples and widely distributed (specimens are found in Europe, Asia and Africa) and naturalized that its origin (geographically and botanically) are unknown. Flowers are yellow to red (two to four inches in diameter). Fruits are ovoid to oblong, green, orange or red, with glochids, and sometimes, spines.

O. fragilis (some common names: brittle cactus, loose prickly pear) is a shrubby mat-forming plant. It is the northernmost of all cacti (from upper Midwest into Canada). It has been heavily hybridized. Its spines are used as fishhooks and its stems used medicinally by indigenous peoples. Flowers are yellow to greenish, less than two inches in diameter. Fruits are green or reddish green, and dry at maturity.

Tephrocactus weberi is a shrubby, erect, branching plant that reaches about eight inches in height. It is found in the Salta and La Rioja, Argentina. Stems are cylindrical, with closely set tubercles, that are distinct but not prominent. Areoles are small, and glochids are pale red and scarce. Spines are needle-like, yellow to red, sometimes flexible, about an inch long. Fruit is turbuculate, dry, thin, and bristly.



Tephrocactus weberi, white-spined form

Anne Keegan, October 2010

Sources: The Cactus Family, Anderson; and, www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week.com

All pictures courtesy of Tom Glavich

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH —

Asclepiad

Plants, among other living things, are classified (based on various characteristics) as follows: Kingdom, Phylum,

Division, Class, Subclass, Superorder, Order, Family, Subfamily, Tribe, Subtribe, Genus, Species, Variety, Form, and Cultivar.

Writing about this month's topic was a bit vexing; so I assumed it referred to the plant family *Asclepiadaceae*, also known as the Milkweed Family.

Carrollus Linnaeus, the father of modern botanical nomenclature, published *Species Plantarum* in 1753. Among the 7,300 plants he described, he assigned three species to a newly-created genus *Ascle-*



pias (*A. decumbens*, *A. incarnata*, and *A. syrica*), known for their milky sap. Linnaeus may have derived the name from Asklepios, the Greek god of healing.

In 1789, the French botanist A.L. de Jussieu, created the family *Apocynaceae* (commonly known as the Dogbane or Periwinkle Family), under which he included the genus *Asclepias*. In 1810, Robert Brown (an English botanist) separated the family *Asclepiadaceae* from *Apocynaceae*, based partly on his work with orchid flowers; the genus *Asclepias* was included in the new family. It is believed that Brown, following Linnaeus' lead, based his name on followers of the Greek god Asklepios, who were known as Asklepiads.

By the turn of the 20th Century, the family *Asclepiadaceae* contained around 348 genera, with about 2,900 species, mainly located in the tropics to subtropics, especially in southern Africa and South America.

Fast forward to 2008. The International Organization of Succulent Plants (IOS), based on scientific analyses, revises its succulent plant classification system based on DNA evidence. The family *Asclepiadaceae* is again incorporated into the family *Apocynaceae*. So where does that leave us?



Larryleachea dinteri

Focusing on the new the subfamily *Asclepiadoideae* (one of five under the revised family *Apocynaceae*). And to save time, skipping over the 12 tribes, and selectively considering the following genera (among 29): *Caralluma*, *Ceropegia*, *Hoya*, *Huernia*, *Orbea*, and *Stapelia*.

These genera differ from others in the subfamily; they have a particularly complex sexual apparatus and complicated pollination procedure, which independently parallels the unrelated *Orchidaceae*, especially in the grouping of their pollen into pollinia. They are easily recognizable by their five-lobed flowers, which are joined together at the base of flower (corolla).



Huernia reticulata flower

These genera have really interesting flowers. The may be striped, solid, dotted, mottled, hairy, and come in rich shades of purple, maroon, beige, cream, and yellow.

These genera require warm weather (though not necessarily

direct sun), and require regular water in the Summer heat if they are growing. Some species (also, individual plants) can be finicky. These need heat, but judicious, sparse watering (i.e., plants must completely dry out between watering); such plants may prefer bottom watering (simulating drier conditions where the roots seek underground moisture). Stop watering plants if the weather cools, particularly in the Summer. Also, be careful not to over-water in the Spring and Fall – to avoid root rot as the plants come out of or go into dormancy. In the Winter, plants prefer some warmth but should be kept dry.

These genera are susceptible to mealy bugs, particularly root mealy bugs; some specific plants seem to attract scale. Fungus can be a problem if plants are over-watered or not kept clean of detritus.

Plants can be grown from seed, but the seeds should be fresh. Many fleshy-stemmed species can be grown from cuttings

Anne Keegan, October 2010

Sources: Cacti and Succulents, Haage; Succulents in Cultivation, Higgins;

www.succulent-plant.com; www.theseedsite.co.uk

Pictures courtesy of Tom Glavich and Buck Hemenway



Thank you to Anne Keegan and 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.



Happy Holidays!

Once again Santa will be flying over the Los Angeles County Arboretum for our annual Holiday Dinner on Sunday, December 5th. The festivities begin at 5:00 pm in Ayers Hall. There will be lots of fun and food.

Even if you have not signed up to bring a dish, feel free to bring that one-of-a-kind entree or dessert that you make so well. Just give me a call on 323 259-5900 (or e-mail @ edgeofeden@sbcglobal.net) and let me know what you plan on bringing, so we don't all show up with the same dish. Our club will provide the turkeys, ham and mashed potatoes.

We need helpers to set up the tables and chairs, and decorate the Hall, before the festivities, and then to help with clean-up and breaking down the tables and chairs afterwards. Set-up begins at 3:00 pm. Come on out and join us for pre-party fun. We can always use helpers in the kitchen, too. Feel free to pitch in wherever you can. Any help is greatly appreciated.

As in past years, there will be a optional plant gift exchange. And, of course, our Holiday auction is the big event of the evening. Bring \$\$\$, your favorite Holiday spirits (to be consumed before the action :), and a hearty appetite.

See you there!

Tommy Dodson (323 259-5900)



Calendar of Upcoming Events

November 6 & 7, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm — San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society Show and Sale at the Los Angeles Arboretum, 310 Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia. Show schedules and entry tags will be available at the meetings and Study Group; the schedule is also posted on the Club's website, www.sgvcss.com.

November 3, 7:30 pm — Gates Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Plant Auction at the San Bernardino County Museum, I-10 at California Street, Redlands. Call Buck Hemenway at 951-360-8802 for more information.

December 3-5, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm — Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Winter Show and Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton. Contact Vince Basta at 714-267-4329 for more information.

December 5, 5:30 pm — San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society **HOLIDAY PARTY** at the Los Angeles Arboretum, 310 Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia.

Refreshment Signup

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

Rita Gerlach
Mary Aparicio
Hannah Nguyen

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



Welcome New Members

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

Carol & Ernest Padilla, Altadena

Joe Perri, Glendora

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

	Cacti of the Month	Succulent of the Month	Study Group
Nov.	Opuntia	Asclepiad	Winter Seed Workshop



San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY 2010

**Club Members and spouses are invited to enjoy an evening of
food, fun and plants.**

On Sunday, December 5

At the Los Angeles Arboretum, Ayers Hall

Starting at 4:30 pm

Our traditional delicious potluck dinner will be followed by a plant exchange and award of prizes for Mini-show entrants. There will be a holiday plant give-away and we will end the evening with an exciting plant auction where participants can acquire desirable specimen plants.

