

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
May 2004 Volume 37 Number 5

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, May 13th. The program for May will be given by Juergen Menzel. He'll tell us all about "Cold-Hardy Cactus of the U.S." including species of pediocactus and sclerocactus. His trips to see them in habitat began 30 years ago, and include a recent trip with Woody Minnich. (Note: the COMMUNIQUE is being sent out a week earlier than usual – editors on vacation.)

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

CACTI – *Astrophytum*

SUCCULENTS – *Aloe*

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.

Study Group: Meetings are held at 7:30 pm. in the Grapevine room, San Gabriel Adult Center, 324 South Mission Drive. These exciting events feature expert group leaders and mentors, free giveaways (some of the best plants you'll ever get!), and lively discussion. Everybody learns something! Join us on Wednesday, May 19th. This month's topic is Vegetative Propagation.

Refreshments: Manny Rivera and Antoinette Koltaj have volunteered to help feed us at the break this month. We continue to need volunteers for coming months, so don't forget the sign-up sheet located at the refreshment table. Our thanks go to Rene Hernandez, Marilyn Mason, Lorraine Lutz and everyone else who brought things for the April meeting.

Personnel Notices: The SCGCSS wishes to extend a warm welcome to its new members Gwendoline Hill and Brenda Brock! Carefully review the COMMUNIQUE and the Roster, and avail yourselves of all the many benefits of membership in our warm and friendly club!

10 years ago: Juan Chahinian gave a "Sansevieria Safari." New members included Richard and Nancy Bogart.

20 years ago: Don DeLano gave a presentation.

30 years ago: Victor Turecek gave the first part of a presentation on "Cactus Exploring in Northern Argentina. Victor was the newest CSSA Board Member and President of the Los Angeles CSS.

(Thanks go to Tom Glavich for providing this interesting feature)

Get Your COMMUNIQUE Online: If you would be content to view the COMMUNIQUE on-line and not receive a copy by regular mail, thus saving the Club treasury about one dollar per copy, enter your name and E-mail address on the sign-up sheet available on the front table at the meeting, or send the information via E-mail to sgv_css@verizon.net.

SGVC&SS Online: <http://www.desertsong.com/sgvcss/> is the Club's web site. 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. You can also download a version of the COMMUNIQUE complete with color photos. Look for the COMMUNIQUE link at the site's main page.

Calendar of Events - 2004

- May 15th-16th** Epiphyllum Society Sale (15th & 16th) and Show (16th). LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA. (310)831-1209.
- May 16th** Huntington Plant Sale. 10-5. Huntington Botanical Garden, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. (626) 405-2160.
- May 22nd -23rd** 28th Gates C&SS Show and Sale. 9-4. Sat. show starts at 1pm. Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA. (909) 360-8802.
- June 5th-6th** San Diego C&SS Show and Sale, Balboa Park Room 101, San Diego, CA. (619) 477-4779.
- July 1st-3rd** CSSA Show and Sale. Opens 10:30. Huntington Botanical Garden, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. (626) 405-2160 or 2277. Plant sales are on the 1st – 3rd. The Show opens to the public on the 2nd. Free Admission to Show and Sale. Thursday July 1st is a free day for the public to enter the rest of the Huntington.
- July 10th** Tentative date for the Club Picnic, to be hosted again by Jean Mullens at her home. Put the date on your calendar!
- August 14th-15th** 17th Annual Intercity Show and Sale. LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA. Call Tom Glavich at (626) 798-2430, Harry Fletcher at (310) 538-4078, or Gene Oster at (818) 998-9306.
- September 4th** Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium. 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA.
- September 26th** Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Auction. Dominguez Adobe, 18127 So. Alameda, Compton (Dominguez Hills), CA.
- October 9th-10th** SGVC&SS Winter Show. LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA.
- December 18th** The Club Christmas Party! Put this date on your calendar too!

March Plant-Of-the-Month Results:**Cacti – *Uebelmannia* and *Discocactus*****Succulents- *Kalanchoe***

Beginner

1 st	Oscar Flores	<i>D. crystallophilus</i>	1 st	Barbara Nolan	<i>K. tomentosa</i>
2 nd	Roy Dodson – Horace Birgh	<i>U. pectinifera</i>	2 nd	Alan Hooker	<i>K. tetraphylla</i>
3 rd	Barbara Nolan	<i>U. sp.</i>	3 rd	Barbara Nolan	<i>K. tomentosa</i>

Intermediate

1 st	Carol & Paul Maker	<i>U. pectinifera</i>	1 st	Ron Young	<i>K. blosfeldiana v. pumila</i>
2 nd	Carol & Paul Maker	<i>D. melanochlorus</i>			

Advanced No Entries!**Master** No Entries!

If you have a cactus or succulent related event that you'd like to have announced in the COMMUNIQUE, please forward the info to me at the address 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@verizon.net or via post to: Paul Maker, 2235 Canyon Road, Arcadia, CA 91006. 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 San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society 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.

San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

Cactus of the Month May 2004 - *Astrophytum*

Astrophytum are often one of the first cacti that start a collection. They are available for pennies (or now quarters) in discount stores, groceries, and home centers. How can anyone resist the \$2. special speckled Bishop's Cap? More than a few show plants started out this way. At the same time, growing a perfect, 10 or 20 year old specimen plant is a challenge few growers can master. Fortunately, the genus offers rewards and surprises at every level between, making it one of the most popular genera of cacti.

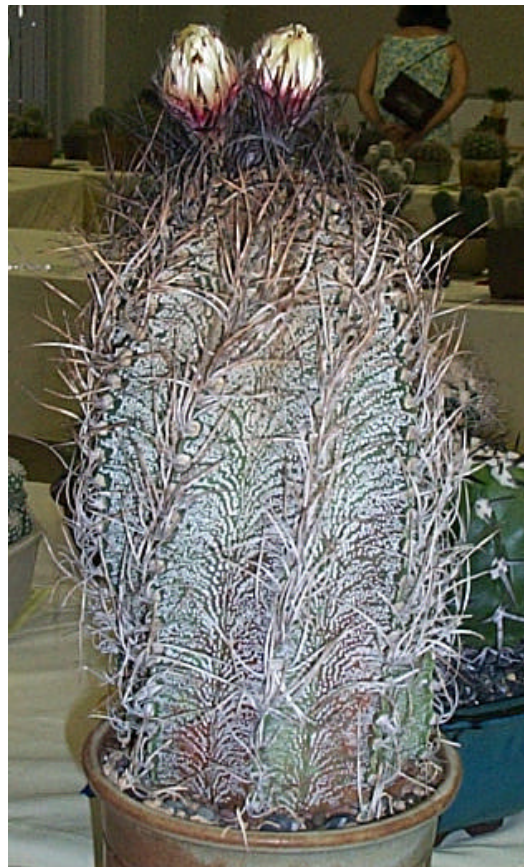


Astrophytum myriostigma v. columnare exhibited by Dick Hulett in the 2001 Inter-city Show

Astrophytum are native to Southern Texas and Northern Central Mexico. They grow in a very arid region, with a porous mineral soil. One of the cultivation difficulties with *Astrophytum* is their tendency to split open from sudden increases in soil moisture level. To avoid this, keep them in a soil that is very quick to drain, and which has little

organic matter. A mixture of pumice and gravel or very coarse sand, with only a little potting soil is best for these plants.

The roots are designed to pump up as much moisture as possible in as short a time as possible from infrequent rains. In a slow draining potting mix they will do this very effectively, and the body of the plant will swell, but the skin will not. Eventually the body pressure gets too great and the skin cracks.



Astrophytum capricorne exhibited by Laura Ostler in the 2001 Inter-city Show

There are currently four recognized species; however, there are older plants, clearly

visibly different from the recognized species available in the trade. There are also varieties of the species, cultivars, and hybrids, all worth growing.

Growers in Japan and more recently in Thailand have developed some spectacular clones, cultivars and hybrids. The Japanese cultivars of *A. asterias* are sold under the name of *A. Super Kabuto* and *A. Miracle Kabuto*. Some of these special clones with intricate patterns can sell for more than \$100, when first developed. After a few years of propagation, the price drops to levels that most can afford. Look for some of these special clones at upcoming shows and sales.

All the Astros:



Astrophytum asterias exhibited by Carol and Paul Maker in the 2001 Inter-city Show

Astrophytum asterias is the smallest of the species. It is the hardest to grow well, prone to splitting if over watered. It is the parent plant for many of the best hybrids. From the Chihuahuan Desert of Northern Mexico. It has prominent, spineless areoles.

Astrophytum capricorne is generally the longest spined species. The spines are

generally twisted and curved. Although young plants are globular, they soon become ovoid, and eventually columnar. It is widespread in the Chihuahuan Desert.



Astrophytum myriostigma exhibited by Vince Basta in the 2001 Inter-city Show

Astrophytum myriostigma is the well known 'Bishops Cap.' Although usually five sided, four sided six, seven and eight sided clones are also common. Spiral forms are also well known as are some very large clones. *A. myriostigma* v. *columnare* can grow to several feet.

Astrophytum ornatum from Hidalgo can grow to 12 inches in diameter and three feet in height. The spines are straight, yellow brown, and the woolly areoles tend to come in patches.

References:

- Anderson, E. **The Cactus Family**
Cullman,
Kobayashi, A. *Cacti and Succulents in Japan. Part 3- Some Cultivars of Astrophytum asterias and A. myriostigma* in the *CSSA Journal Vol. 68, p 245* (1996)
Preston-Mafham, **Cacti, The Illustrated Dictionary**

Photos T. Nomer
Tom Glavich April 2004

San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

Succulent of the Month May 2004 - *Aloes*

Aloes are native to most of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and Madagascar. They are naturalized in every Mediterranean environment in the world, as well as some temperate and tropical regions. With only a few exceptions, all Aloes will grow readily in Southern California, either in the ground, or in pots. When in the ground they require minimal care, existing happily on only natural rainfall in most years.



Aloe petricola

The long blooming racemes of brightly colored *Aloe* flowers are attractive to sunbirds in Africa and hummingbirds in the West. When in bloom, hummingbirds will visit every few minutes, going from plant to plant and yard to yard, fertilizing hundreds of flowers as they make their rounds.

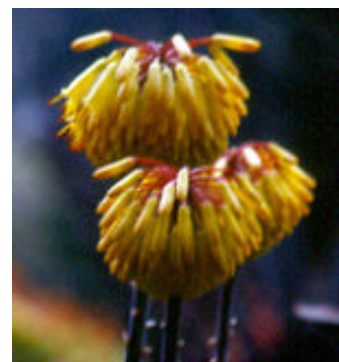
Aloes are easily propagated. Cuttings are left to dry for a week or so and placed into a pot or directly into the ground. Seeds of common and rare species are available

through several seed houses and the CSSA. Seeds store well and germinate quickly when planted in mid spring (April is best.) Flowering plants can be produced within two years from seed, for the smaller species and three or four for many of the larger.



Aloe ferox

Aloes grow best with a balanced fertilizer when in active growth. Best growth will occur when given adequate root room, although some smaller species will tolerate considerable crowding.



Aloe capitata

There are only two serious pests of *Aloes*, rust and mites. *Aloe rust*, which produces red ringed spots black or brown spots on the leaves is a fungal disease, and can be controlled with any fungicide. *Aloe galls*

are produced by the *Aloe mite*. These nearly invisible insects cause deformed flower stalks or leaves. The plant should be removed from all others, and is best destroyed, although eventual cure is possible with a heavy dose of systemic insecticide.

Great Aloes

Aloe barberae (bainesii) is a tree aloe, growing to 40 feet. It grows quickly in the ground, reaching 5 feet in just three years from a 4 inch pot if treated well, with long green recurved leaves.

Aloe dichotoma and the closely related *Aloe ramosissima* are smooth barked tree Aloes, with *dichotoma* being single trunked and *ramosissima* being multiple trunked.

Aloe plicatilis has strap shaped leaves in two opposing rows, giving it the name the 'Fan Aloe'. Careful attention to watering is required to keep the ends of the leaves from turning black in the summer.

Aloe lineata will grow to 6 feet. It is single stemmed, and keeps the old dead leaves to shade the trunk. It's a spectacular plant, with straight, narrow dark green lines, on a light green background.

Aloe thraskii is another graceful single stemmed plant with yellow-orange flowers. It grows near the coast in South Africa.

Aloe globuligemma a South African and Zimbabwean species has racemes that branch from a long main stem. Instead of the conical or cylindrical forms that most Aloe racemes have, all of the flowers are in lines along the upper part of the stem.

Aloe aristata is a dwarf aloe, with heads only a few inches across. The leaves are soft, with thin needle like leaf tips. It's a particularly good pot plant.

Aloe brevifolia is another dwarf, making large clumps of stiff glaucous blue leaves. It does well in the garden as well as being a good show plant.

Aloe variegata has hard dark leaves with a white edge and white spots. It's one of the most spectacular, and easily grown.

Aloe 'Doran Black' is a spectacular hybrid, and has appeared on our raffle table a few times in the past year. It is a complex cross, created By R. Wright. Parentage is unknown.

Aloe 'Tegelberg's Triumph' appears to be a hybrid between *Aloe aristata* and *Aloe erinacea*.

The classical references on *Aloe* are **The Aloes of Tropical Africa and Madagascar** and **The Aloes of South Africa**, both by G.W. Reynolds. In **The Aloes of South Africa**. There are more recent works as well, and the newest species, mostly from the Arabian Peninsula and Northern Tropical Africa are described in the CSSA Journal.

References

G. W. Reynolds, **The Aloes of South Africa**

G. W. Reynolds, **The Aloes of Tropical Africa and Madagascar**

Tom Glavich April 2004

**19th Annual Inter-city
Cactus and Succulent Show and
Sale**

Sat. and Sun. August 14 & 15, 2004 9 to 5

Los Angeles Arboretum and Botanic Garden
301 N. Baldwin Ave. Arcadia, CA

The Largest and Finest Cactus and Succulent Show Anywhere!



Information, Please contact Tom Glavich 626-798-2430
Harry Fletcher 310-538-4078 Gene Oster 818-998-9306

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