



Thorny Issues

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Volume 53, #11

'Mutants' ♦ Monday—November 26th, 7 pm



OKAY, this month we are back to a somewhat normal Program. But with something extra! Our guest for November is Tom Glavich from Altadena, CA. Tom is the Vice President of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA), and one of the co-chairs of the Inter-City Cactus and Succulent Show. Tom's presentation will be on 'Mutants.' He is a long time collector of succulent plants, and a member of most of the LA area succulent societies. The subject is the

mutant plants that add so much to the succulent world. The first part of Tom's presentation will be a look at different kinds of mutations. The second part of the program will be how to propagate and make your own mutant plants. We will look at crests, monstrose, variegated and other mutations. So my advice: get here early for a good seat, bring paper & pen for note taking, and a camera for a possible photo op. Remember to bring in your plants for our 'Cactus/Succulent Corner' for which you receive one raffle ticket for each of your plants. AND bring extra cash for our plant raffle because Tom is not only bringing in plants to sell, he is also bringing the plants for our raffle. Remember, this is Your Club. Have new ideas you would like to include at our meetings? Let me know!

Sandy Waters, Program Chair

PS ... Keith and I put our heads together for an interesting 2013!



Astrophytum Lotusland

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For your holiday tree hanging pleasure. (Laura Eubanks)

Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society

- Meetings are held the 4th Monday of each month at 7pm
- Location: Shepard Garden & Arts Center in Sacramento.
- 3330 McKinley Blvd
- Center's phone number — 916/808-8800
- No official meeting in December
- The public is warmly invited to attend meetings

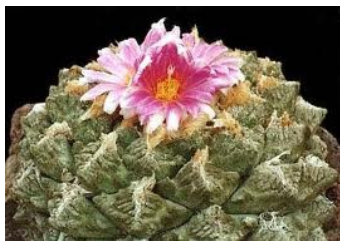
President's Message

The feed back I'm getting from the members is that the pinch pot and glazing programs were a BIG success! Look for a repeat next year – coil pots this time with glazing to follow. The firing has begun, one load completed and one more to go. There are few pots that did not get glazed due to the creator not showing up for the glaze party. Thought about staining them and have them available at the potting program Feb or Mar instead of leaving them unfinished or tossing them out. What do you think I should do? Let me know at the meeting. – Keith Taylor



Cactus — Ariocarpus

Ariocarpus is a small genus of Mexican rock cactus (one species is found in Texas). They have curious rock-like forms and textures, and blend very well with the soil and rocks in their native habitat. They have no spines and the rock like texture has the side effect to reflect the heat of the sun and give them some insulation in summer. They also have a strong turnip-like root that, according to some authors, is able to contract during drought, and somewhat pull them closer to the ground. All this camouflage has not protected them from cactus hunters, and their slow growth has made them less able to react fast enough to the changes in habitat brought by agriculture and ranching. They are all endangered and protected in their habitats. In cultivation



Ariocarpus fissuratus



Ariocarpus trigonus

they are extremely slow to grow, they need summer heat, and good drainage. They are propagated by seeds. The seedlings are often grafted on other species to increase the speed at which they grow. The name comes from the ancient Greek "aria" (an oak type) and "carpos" (=fruit) because of the resemblance of the fruit of the two genus in acorn form. Another possibility for the origin of the name is the work Scheidweiler did on the tree *Sorbus aria* at the time he described the genus *Ariocarpus*. He might have meant the fruits of *Ariocarpus* plants look like the fruits of the *Sorbus aria*.

Succulent — Any “Variegate”

Just about any plant can potentially have variegation, and in many this feature denotes one of genetic weakness or a viral infection. However, in many others variegation almost seems to be the norm and these plants are incredibly hardy and resilient landscape and potted plants. And they look great, partly because they look different, but mostly because the multiple colors are often more attractive than the single colors. Variegation in succulents is almost always caused by normal genetic variation, at least initially ... once this mutation occurs, they are selected for and magnified in the cultivation process. Most variegates in the wild would probably be eliminated due to the tendency for the variegated tissues to be naturally ‘weaker’ and more prone to insect attack, sun damage, lesser ability to photosynthesize in low light situations (and hence become weak and die) and infection from fungi and bacteria. But in captivity, under the right environments, or protected from evolutionary pressures, many of these variegated plants perform beautifully and make excellent landscape and potted plants. Usually variegation is due to the lack of chlorophyll in that section of the leaf forming a yellow or white band, streak or mottling of tissue. Sometimes variegation is due to the presence of pigments that mask the chlorophyll pigments producing even darker colors (purples, reds, etc.). Variegation streaking down the middle of leaves is referred to as medio-variegation while variegation down the sides of the leaves (margins) is margin-variegation.



Haworthia limifolia (variegated)

Mini Show Winners — Month, 2012

Cactus — Melocactus/Discocactus	
1 st	<i>Melocactus ferraophilis longispinus</i> (= <i>M. azureus</i> ssp. <i>ferreophilus</i>), Michelle Egan
2 nd	<i>Melocactus</i> sp., Mary Schuett
Succulent — Agave	
1 st	<i>Agave victoria-reginae</i> , Michelle Egan
2 nd	<i>Agave lophantha</i> , Mary Schuett
3 rd	<i>Agave applanata variegata</i> , Bobbie Handen

Thought for the Month

*A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue,
but the parent of all the other virtues.*
— Cicero



From the Editor’s Desk —

Publication Deadline — 10th of each month.
Please forward all submissions for consideration to my contact info (per your choice) found on back page.

Respectfully your editor, Mara Aditajs

DATES & DETAILS —

➤ WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Rich & Becky Wymore

[REDACTED]

➤ NOVEMBER – ELECTION, SC&SS

The Nomination Committee has put forth this slate of nominees:

PRESIDENT – Keith Taylor

VICE PRESIDENT – Sandy Waters

SECRETARY – Sue Ballinger

TREASURER – Greg Lang

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – Gerhard Bock, Beverly Clairfield, Karen Dines, and Ken Dines

There will be a request for any nominations from the floor. Voting for the 2013 Officers & BOD will then take place.

– Michelle Egan, Nomination Committee

Vote

➤ SUNSHINE REPORT – TRISH BRUGA

Trish Bruga is home and doing excellent! The Club sent a card and a lovely tri-colored Kalanchoe to her. She and husband Dick thank everyone for their support and good wishes. For those Club members that do not receive email or were not at the October meeting – Marilyn Vilas announced to the Club at the October meeting that one of our own was in need of "sunshine" from the membership. Trish Bruga fell at her home last weekend (10/20). She is now recovering from surgery to the vertebrae in her neck which was done on Tuesday (10/23) afternoon.

According to Dick, her husband, the surgery was a success. She is now home. At the moment it's a relief that all went well so far. Please let her and Dick know that we are thinking of them both and that they are in our thoughts and prayers!

You may send your "sunshine" greetings to their home -- I'm sure these will help Trish mend even quicker!!



Trish Bruga, Sunday November 4th

[REDACTED]

➤ HOME WANTED FOR LARGE BARREL CACTUS

A co-worker of mine has a large cactus, 20" tall by 16" wide, that needs to find a home since his wife feels it's too dangerous to have in their back yard. It's about 35 years old. This is a photo of his plant. If you're interested in buying it, you can contact him at [REDACTED]. He says that he'll take the best offer he can get. The pot comes with it!

– Tom Flynn

(Good to hear from Tom!)



➤ SHOULD I PUT GRAVEL IN THE BOTTOM OF MY CONTAINER GARDENS?

(By Dr. Linda Chalker-Scott) – The short answer is NO!

The Myth This is just one of those myths that refuses to die, regardless of solid scientific evidence to the contrary! Nearly every book or web site on container gardening recommends placing coarse material at the bottom of



containers for drainage. The materials most often recommended for this practice are sand, gravel, pebbles, and pot shards. Other 'benefits' often mentioned

include preventing creatures from entering through the drain holes, and stabilizing the container. Some of these recommendations are quite specific and scientific sounding. Consider this advice from a 1960's book on container plants: "Adequate drainage is secured by covering the hole in the bottom of the pot with a piece of broken flowerpot, concave side down; this in turn is covered with a layer (1/2" to 1" deep) of flowerpot chips. On top of this, a 1/4" to 3/8" layer of coarse organic material, such as flaky leaf mold, is placed." The advice seems to make perfect sense, and it's presented so precisely. After all, we know that plants need good drainage so their roots receive adequate oxygen, and we also know that water passes through coarsely textured material faster than it does fine material. So what's not to like?

DATES & DETAILS — (CON'T)

The Reality Nearly 100 years ago, soil scientists demonstrated that water does not move easily from layers of finer textured materials to layers of more coarse textured. Since then, similar studies have produced the same results. Additionally, one study found that more moisture was retained in the soil underlain by gravel than that underlain by sand. Therefore, the coarser the underlying material, the more difficult it is for water to move across the interface. Imagine what happens in a container lined with pot shards!

Some of my other columns have mentioned soil interfaces and their inhibition of water movement. We can see the



same phenomenon occurring here: gravitational water will not move from a finely soil texture into a coarser material until the finer soil is saturated. Since the stated goal for using coarse material in the bottoms of containers is to "keep soil from getting water logged," it is ironic that adding this material will induce the very state it is intended to prevent.

Linda Chalker-Scott is an extension urban horticulturist and associate professor at Puyallup Research and Extension Center, Washington State University. She is the Washington State editor of *MasterGardener* magazine and for six years she authored an online column, 'Horticultural Myths.'

(Courtesy, *The Offset-September 2012* – Central Oklahoma Cactus and Succulent Society newsletter)

➤ FIELD TRIP TO THE RUTH BANCROFT GARDENS – FRUIT TASTING TOUR

On October 20th a half dozen members made the drive to Walnut Creek for their yearly fruit tasting tour. The



View of the Ruth Bancroft Gardens

established plants to taste what had already been picked for us to try. Our first fruit was from a couple of jelly palms. One was sweet, tasting of mango and the second was a little sour, perhaps better for jelly. Five different

Garden was started by Ruth in 1971 when she was 62 years old. It is a water conserving garden with cacti, succulents, palms and other plants Ruth liked. Ruth still lives next door and is 104 years old.

We began our tour stopping at various large

Opuntias were next, with opinions on taste varying by taster. Then came *Cereus*, *Myrtillocactus*, and *Feijoa*. At the end were pomegranates and a strawberry tree. Back at the beginning we had samples of fruit which needed to be peeled and sectioned to make them easier to eat. All in all, a great showcase of succulents and their fruit. We then were invited to *Plantaseca* in Alamo by the owners, William & Karla Munkacsy. Their front yard and around the corner was a spectacular collection of



Opuntia loaded with "prickly pears"



Agave with an emerging flower spike

succulents in amongst large lava rocks. Their back yard behind the fence and house was a huge collection of hot boxes, greenhouses with thousands of plants which he grows and sells at many shows around the state. He graciously opened all up for us to see and purchase what we wanted. He is retired and this is a "hobby that got out of hand." His knowledge is as immense as his collection and gave each of us tips on growing our own cacti and succulents.

– Mike Price

➤ 2013 MEMBERSHIP – REMINDER

This is a reminder that Membership fees are collected annually, are payable November 1st, and no later than December 31st. The fees are \$15.00 for individuals, and \$20.00 for families (two or more persons). Please send your fees along with the membership renewal form to me at the address on the form. (The form is also available at the SCSS Website at www.sacramentocss.org/membership.html). Membership fees must be received no later than January 16th in order for you to continue to receive the newsletter and to ensure that your information will be included in the new 2013 SCSS Roster which will be published shortly after. To those who joined in October or later your membership is covered thru 2013. Please contact me if you have any questions/concerns.

DATES & DETAILS — (CON'T)

Thanks in advance for your prompt renewals, George R. Avery, SCSS Membership Chair

➤ DIY – SUCCULENT TOPIARY TREES

A delightful centerpiece for your holiday table!

How to make these:

- Buy 8-inch, preformed moss balls from a craft store (we got our's from Michaels).
- Soak them well in water before use.
- Give them a "stem" strong enough for support - here we used a bamboo stick wrapped in brown floral tape and secured all the way through the ball.
- Then, pack them full of succulent cuttings and secure in with a few U-shaped pins.
- Secure in a pot of heavy sand.



Alternatively, you could hang them in front of a sunny window. To care for them, just take them outside once a week and soak down the ball of moss.

(Courtesy, [Oasis Plants](#))

➤ DESIGN TIP – TEXTURE/REPETITION/SCALE

A few design tips will help you to create fabulous succulent arrangements like this one from [Roger's Gardens](#).

~Texture – the container is oozing texture with it's distressed look, use this to your advantage by choosing an 'opposite' such as a smooth leafed succulent.

~Repetition – the container has green, repeat this in the choice of succulents. A bit hard to see in the photo, but center in the back is an Echeveria with green leaves and tips of a dark red-black, again, repeating the colors in the container. Repetition can also be achieved by repeating the rosette shape of the succulents.

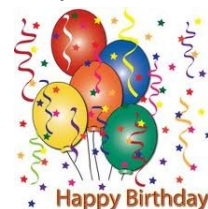
~Scale – this refers to proportions not fish. The succulents are all placed to the same height called pave. It works with the height of the container by taking 1/3 the height of the container and using this as the final height of all the succulents. With a relatively small opening to work with, use no more than 3 different succulents. Too many and the composition will be confusing and not cohesive.



And most importantly, have fun! Cindy from [The Succulent Perch](#)

➤ CELEBRATE – JANUARY BIRTHDAYS!

- January 1 – JoAnn Delaney & Bob Feyock
- January 4 – Paulette Mulligan
- January 5 – Elton Roberts
- January 10 – Naomi Bloss & Kathleen Joy
- January 12 – Frank Bloss
- January 14 – Lisa Bloss
- January 20 – Edward Myhro
- January 24 – Allenya Kirby
- January 26 – Priscilla Barrett
- January 31 – Connie Esquibel



➤ SC&SS ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY



You are cordially invited to the
Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society
Annual Holiday Party

DATE – Friday, December 14th

TIME – Set up, 6pm & Dinner, 6:30pm

WHERE – Shepard Garden & Arts Center, Sacramento

DETAILS – Club will provide the main course, please bring your 'fav' side, salad, or dessert to share. Punch will be also provided.

GIFT EXCHANGE – Bring a gift (not more than \$15) & exchange it for another that catches your eye!

JOIN US – For an evening of Food, Friendship, & Fun!!

May this Christmas end the present year on a cheerful note and make way for a fresh and bright New Year.

Here's wishing you a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

Your Hosts, The Officers & Board of Directors





FIRST CLASS

Next Meeting Date ♦ Monday, November, 26th -- 7 pm

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

c/o Mara Aditajs, Editor





WE'RE ON THE WEB!

Click on the 3 links below to go directly to our website, Facebook, or the CSSA website

www.sacramentocss.org



December, 2012

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
*** Remember to renew your 2013 Membership						1
2	3	4 [Redacted]	5	6	7 [Redacted]	8 [Redacted] 
9	10 [Redacted]	11 [Redacted]	12	13	14 SC&SS CHRISTMAS PARTY 6 PM	15
16	17	18	19	20	21 [Redacted]	22 [Redacted]
23/30 [Redacted]	24/31 [Redacted]	25 [Redacted] 	26 [Redacted]	27	28	29