



# Thorny Issues

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Volume 55, #1

## Final Step of DIY Project: Plant Your Pot Monday, January 27, 7 pm



After making pots in August and glazing them in October, now is the time for the grand reveal. SCSS president Keith Taylor has fired the glazed pots and will bring them to the January meeting. Your mission between now and January 27th is to find the perfect plant to put in your new pot. Succulents are the logical choice – *duh!*, as Homer Simpson would say – but of course you can pick anything you like. Although you should be prepared for a weird glance or two if you bring an African violet.

In addition to your plant (or plants, if you made more than one pot), bring soil and top dressing as well as any tools you may need. Chopsticks are great for pushing down the soil, and a small brush is ideal to brush dirt off leaves. With any luck, the finished result might be so beautiful that you'll want to enter it in our 2014 Annual Show on May 3 and 4!

If you enjoyed making pots, please let me or Keith know. We're tentatively planning to do it again this August and October, but your feedback is always appreciated.  
– Gerhard Bock, Program Chair



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*Moreae aristata*  
Endemic to the city of Cape Town

### Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society

- Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> 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

Here we go again ... good or bad, you're stuck with me. The one thing I would like to try and put together for this year is an extended field trip to a C&S Show and Sale. I believe this would be a beneficial and fun excursion. We could get out of the local scene and view how other clubs operate, see specimens from varying climates and purchase plants from different regions of the state. This would have to be an overnight trip, so bus, lodging and meals would all need to be considered. Let me know what you think, in person or by phone or email. [SEE ROSTER]

Pots, they are ready! We will be planting them this month. Bring soil, plants, topdressing or anything else you may need.

– Keith Taylor

## Cactus — Mammillaria

There are around 300 species of *Mammillarias*. Most are native to Mexico, some are native from southwestern USA, Caribbean, Central America, or even a couple in northern South America. In their range you can find *Mammillarias* from sea level to high elevations. They also vary in size from miniature 1 inch in diameter (2.5 cm), to columnar types 1 foot tall (30 cm). The name *Mammillaria* comes from the Latin for "nipple", because the areolas (structures carrying the spines) are carried by nipple like structures instead of being organized in ribs like many other cacti. Another significant difference is that the flowers are not coming from the areola, but from the area at the juncture of 2 tubercles. As could be expected from so many species, their growing requirements are quite varied. Many species are easy and fast to grow and to get to bloom while young, this is why they are very popular. Some are quite hardy while others will rot easily if kept too cold. All of them require excellent drainage. This is more easily accomplished by using a good cactus soil mixture, and using a shallow pot. In general the *Mammillarias* bloom easily, but many species need a rest period in winter during which they are kept cool in order to bloom. Furthermore flowers form a ring on tissue grown the previous growing season, so it is important to get them to grow every year, which means regular watering and fertilizing during their growing period.



*Mammillaria swinglei*



*Mammillaria gracilis*



*Mammillaria pilcayensis*

## Succulent — South African Winter-Blooming Bulbs

What can you enjoy in your winter greenhouse that requires little care the rest of the year? Since South African winters are bright and cool, just not nearly as cold as ours, these bulbs don't need actual "forcing." An approximation of their natural growing habitat—easily provided in this hemisphere by the winter greenhouse—is all they require to be coaxed into bloom. With a preference for night temperatures around 50°F and daytime highs of 65°, they make perfect container subjects, thriving in the same conditions as *Cineraria* and *Cyclamen*. *Lachenalia* hybrids, including *L. 'Rupert'* and *L. 'Romaud,'* are readily available and bloom for more than six weeks. *Moreas* are in the iris family, and have flowers and leaves reminiscent of them. The flowers of *M. aristata* have white petals with dramatic blue patches on them. *Moreas*, particularly rewarding and they're not difficult to grow. The blossoms of *Scilla peruviana* form striking



*Scilla peruviana*

spheres composed of numerous deep violet flowers, despite their name, these are not from Peru, and they are remarkably shade-tolerant. The bulbs can be stored in pots beneath the greenhouse benches the rest of the year; a basement would work well too. When nighttime

temperatures begin to drop around October 1<sup>st</sup>, the pots are moved into the light, kept around 50° and watered. Cooler temps, especially at night, are fine, but higher ones can be problematic, particularly when above 70°. Many South African bulbs can also be started from seed. The process isn't difficult, but does require patience—most take at least three years to reach blooming size. The first year they send up grassy leaves, and in the second season they produce tiny bulbs. It is recommended planting in standard terracotta pots, which provide better drainage than bulb pans. A recommended soil mix is a 50/50 mix of builder's sand and sifted compost. Bone meal can be added for nutrients, with an additional dose of diluted fertilizer when buds are setting. Their bloom will peak between January and March.

## DATES & DETAILS —

### Mini Show Selections — 2014

	CACTUS	SUCCULENT
JANUARY	Mammillaria	South African Winter-Blooming Bulbs
FEBRUARY	Cereus - any type	Mesembs
MARCH	Monotypic Cactus	Miniature Succulents
APRIL	Gymnocalycium	Anacampseros
MAY	Your Favorite Cactus	Your Favorite Succulent
JUNE	Opuntia/Pereskia	Senecio/Kleinia
JULY	Rebutia/Sulcorebutia	Haworthia/Gasteria
AUGUST	Miniature Cactus	Stapelia/Huernia/Duvalia
OCTOBER	Ferocactus/Leuchtenbergia	Bromeliads
NOVEMBER	Schlumbergia (Christmas Cacti)	Euphorbia/Jatropha

#### ➤ OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2014

The election of officers was held at the November meeting. The membership present at the meeting voted and elected the following:

**President** – Keith Taylor

**Vice-President/Program Chair** – Gerhard Bock

**Secretary** – Susan Ballinger

**Treasurer** – Greg Lang.

The Board of Directors stays basically the same with Beverly Clairfield, Ken and Karen Dines, and Michelle Egan as *Ex officio*. Gerhard Bock is leaving the Board of Directors and has moved to the elected office of Vice-President/Program Chair. We thank them all for their service to the Club!

– Michelle Egan, Nomination Committee

#### ➤ GRAPEVINE SUCCULENT CONTAINER

Create a 'Container' for Succulents by using dried vines, such as angle vine or grapevines and create a Nest! Start with the bottom of the nest by bunching up the vine and then work in a circular fashion and build the vine up on itself to create a bowl effect. Secure with bind wire. Hot glue dry Sphagnum Moss to the nest and add your succulents...they can be wired or glued on. Roots will grow around the glue (tacky gel glue or hot glue) and the glue will not harm the succulents.

(Courtesy, Cindy Davison, *The Succulent Perch*)



#### ➤ WHY YOU GARDEN, BY FRAN SORIN

*"Sometimes we need others to remind us that much of what we desire is, in fact, possible; all we need to do is dig down into our courage, embrace the unknown, and invite our creative minds out to play. It is then that we can access our infinite possibility and grow into the fullest expression of who we may yet be."*

– Fran Sorin

Your garden mirrors your soul. When your creativity is unfettered, you're in full bloom. In a state of silent exhilaration. Savoring each moment. Abraham Maslow coined the phrase 'peak experience'. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi calls it 'flow'. This is where your soul yearns to be. Our culture may try to brainwash you into believing that 'garden making' is solely about creating a 'beautiful garden'. I've challenged that premise for years

## DATES & DETAILS — (CON'T)

and initially wrote about it in my book *DIGGING DEEP: Unearthing Your Creative Roots Through Gardening*.



Why You Garden—You garden because you need to make a profound connection with the Earth. It's your birthright. A primordial longing to experience and participate in the magic of nature. The deep knowing that ultimately nature is your teacher. Your guide. You're a participant. A cog in the wheel. Not in charge. You learn to slow down. And listen to what the land has to tell you. Sometimes finding balance and harmony. Other times total frustration and cacophony. It's the Tao, *Dark and Light. Ebb and Flow*.

You work in the garden relentlessly because you have to. Fingernails clogged up with dirt. Sweat streaming down your face. It's here that you feel most comfortable in your skin. At peace. And yet, paradoxically 'on fire'. Nurturing and being nurtured. Part of the cosmic consciousness. Participating in 'sacred play'. Every keen gardener intuitively knows this.

You have a deep seeded vision of what you want your garden to 'be'. A yearning that is embedded in your unconscious. This is - in part - what propels you forward. Keeps you chipping away. To get to the essence of what's underneath. To embrace your soul - your creative fire. At the end of the day, after you clean up and store tools, you take a few minutes just to be in your garden. It's in those moments that you feel a penetrating serenity. *A state of bliss*.

"The goal of life is to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe to match your nature with Nature." Joseph Campbell.

Where You Garden Doesn't Matter—It doesn't matter where you garden - in the city or suburbs. On a terrace, windowsill, containers. A shared or private garden.

It's the act of gardening that gives you a sense of well being.



It's getting your hands in the earth that immerses you in feelings of abundance, generosity, kindness, and love. Gardening is about taking a leap of faith. Letting go of control ... surrendering. And giving your soul permission to dance with the 'Gods of nature'.

This New Year of 2014, I've made a promise to myself. To speak out when someone refers to gardening as an 'activity' or 'past time'. I've made a commitment to declare what I think the act of gardening really is. Will you join me in getting the word out?

([Gardening Gone Wild](#) post for January 3, 2014)

*About Fran Sorin*—Fran's book, *Digging Deep: Unearthing Your Creative Roots Through Gardening*, now considered a classic, was groundbreaking when published as no one had written about gardening in the context of creativity, spirituality, and transformation. In addition to being a recognized garden expert and deep ecologist, Fran is a broadcaster, journalist, Ordained Interfaith Minister, and Soul Tender.



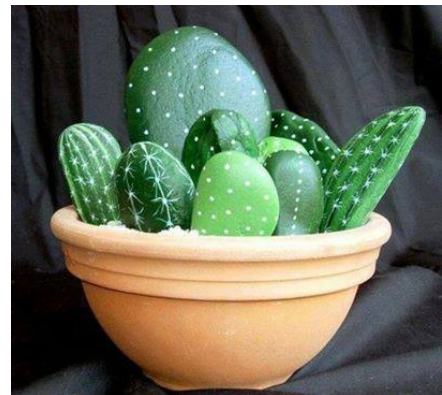
### ➤ SUNSHINE

Please let your Sunshine Chair know of any one who needs a cheery note. Contact Marilyn Vilas either by phone or email [SEE ROSTER] and she will be glad to send a card.

### ➤ ARE THESE REAL?

Check out this very interesting planter of cactus pads. Are they real? Actually they are painted pebbles. A safe & low maintenance planter.

(Photo courtesy of [Existing Actually](#))



## DATES & DETAILS — (CON'T)

### ➤ AND WE THOUGHT IT WAS COLD IN CALIFORNIA — TRY OKLAHOMA!

(Rosario Douglas is the newsletter editor for the Central Oklahoma Cactus & Succulent Society. The following is an excerpt from their January 2014 newsletter)

"Here are some photos Mike Douglas (her husband) took after our last ice storm in mid December. Ice is a pain but it sure changes the landscape and the plants, providing many photo opportunities. The photos were taken in our backyard and front garden."



Upper left: Icy Agave, Upper right: an Opuntia pad.



An Echinocereus from our garden encased in ice



A cholla (*Opuntia spinosior*) joint covered in ice.

## Mini Show Winners — October, 2013

### Cactus — Ariocarpus

- 1<sup>st</sup> *Ariocarpus fissuratus*, Keith Taylor
- 2<sup>nd</sup> *Ariocarpus fissuratus*, Michelle Egan
- 3<sup>rd</sup> *Ariocarpus retusus*, Mary Schuett

### Succulent — Crassula

- 1<sup>st</sup> "A collection of Crassula," 'Tom Thumb', *brevifolia*, *commutata*, 'Ivory Towers', and 'Pagoda Village', Candice Suter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> *Crassula marnieriana* 'Baby Necklace,' Michelle Egan
- 3<sup>rd</sup> *Crassula deceptor*, Keith Taylor
- HM *Crassula arborescens*, Mary Schuett

## Mini Show Winners — November, 2013

### Cactus — Schlumbergia (Christmas Cactus)

- 1<sup>st</sup> *Schlumbergia*, Steve Goodman
- 2<sup>nd</sup> *Schlumbergia* "Dark Marie," Michelle Egan

### Succulent — Tylecodon / Sarcocaulon

- 1<sup>st</sup> *Tylecodon reticulata*, Keith Taylor
- 2<sup>nd</sup> *Tylecodon* sp., Mary Schuett

Thought for the Month

Happy New Year one and all



*Acanthocalycium minuta* (Courtesy Elton Roberts)



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.

**E-mail: [ldybugg6@comcast.net](mailto:ldybugg6@comcast.net)**

Respectfully your editor, Mara Aditajs



# FIRST CLASS

Next Meeting Date ♦ Monday, January 27th

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

c/o Mara Aditajs, Editor

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

E-mail: ldybugg6@comcast.net

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[www.sacramentocss.org](http://www.sacramentocss.org)



## FEBRUARY, 2014

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1
2 [REDACTED]	3	4	5 [REDACTED]	6 [REDACTED]	7 [REDACTED]	8
9 [REDACTED]	10	11	12 [REDACTED]	13 [REDACTED]	14 [REDACTED]	15 [REDACTED]
16	17 [US Flag]	18	19 [REDACTED]	20 [REDACTED]	21 [REDACTED]	22 [REDACTED]
23	24 Sacramento C&S Mtg – 7pm	25	26	27	28	<b>RENEW YOUR 2014 MEMBERSHIP</b>