

Thorny Issues

Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society

July 2015 | Volume 56, VII

Next Meeting
MONDAY
July 27

JULY PROGRAM
GUEST SPEAKER
WOODY MINNICH



Our next club meeting will be on Monday, July 27 at 7:00 pm. Our guest speaker will be Woody Minnich, a club favorite. This time Woody will take us to the southern hemisphere in a presentation called “South Africa: from the Klein Karoo to the Great Karoo.”

Nowhere in the world is there a more floristic region than that of South Africa. The diversity of plants, from the monocots to the dicots, is just fantastic. Some of the genera we will see from this expedition include Aloe, Avonia, Anacampseros, Conophytum, Crassula, Cotyledon, Dioscorea, Gibbeaum, Glottiphyllum, Haworthia, Larryleachia, Lithops, Monsonia, Pachypodium, Pelargonium, Quaqua, Senecio, Stapelia, Tylecodon as well as many other seldom seen or rare genera. Woody and his wife Kathy made this trip in South Africa’s winter –August in the northern hemisphere. The colors created by the stress of winter were often spectacular, and it’s amazing the number of plants that choose to produce their beautiful flowers during this season.

As always, Woody and Kathy will bring beautiful succulents for sale so be sure to bring your wallet and a box.

–Gerhard Bock, Vice President and Program Chair

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY WENDELL S. (WOODY) MINNICH 2015

Woody, as he is commonly called, has been in the cactus hobby for some 45 years and has become well known for his participation in many of the cactus and succulent clubs. He is an honorary life member of nine clubs as well as a life member of CSSA (Cactus & Succulent Society of America.) He has served in almost all positions of leadership from president, to newsletter editor, to show chairman and so on. He is also known for his extensive field work studying primarily the cactus family. He has traveled throughout Africa, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Madagascar, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Peru, Socotra, the United States and Yemen. From these trips and his nursery experience, he has developed an extensive knowledge of the cactus family as well as many of the other succulent genera.

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JULY SUCCULENT AND CACTUS MINI SHOW

Mini Show Descriptions by Steve Goodman.
Photos by Gerhard Bock

Succulent • PACHYPODIUM

Pachypodium is a genus of succulent spine-bearing trees and shrubs, native to Madagascar and Africa. They belong to the family *Apocynaceae* along with *Adenium* and the ubiquitous *Oleander*. *Pachypodium* comes from a Latin form of the Greek *pachus* (thick) and *podion* (foot). All *Pachypodiums* are succulent plants that exhibit, to varying degrees, the morphological characteristics of pachycaul trunks and spinescence. These are the most general features of the genus and can be considered distinguishing characteristics.

The pachycaul trunk is a morphologically enlarged trunk that stores water so as to survive seasonal drought or intermittent periods of root desiccation in exposed, dry, and rocky conditions. Whereas there is great variation in the habit of the plant body, all *Pachypodiums* exhibit pachycaul growth. Variation in habit can range from dwarf flattened plants to bottle shaped shrubs to dendroid-shaped trees.

The second general characteristic of *Pachypodium* is spinescence, or having spines. The spines come clustered in either pairs or triplets with these clusters often arranged in rings or whorls around the trunk. Spines emerge with leaves, and like leaves grow for a short period before stopping growth and hardening. Spines do not regenerate so weathering and abrasion can wear away all but the youngest spines from older specimens, leaving smooth trunks and branches. Most *Pachypodiums* are branched but some such as *Pachypodium namaquanum* may never branch and *Pachypodium brevicaula* sprout leaves and flowers directly from the pachycaul trunk.



Pachypodium eburneum

JUNE SUCCULENT & CACTUS MINI SHOW WINNERS



SUCCULENT: STAPELIA / HUERNIA / HOODIA

- 1st: *Trichocaulon (Hoodia) pilifera*, George Avery
- 2nd: *Huernia primulina*, Steve Goodman
- 3rd: *Stapelia* sp., Michelle Egan
- HM: *Stapelia* sp., Chere Peterson

CACTUS: REBUTIA & SULCOREBUTIA

- 1st: *Sulcorebutia arenacea*, George Avery
- 2nd: *Rebutia violaciflora*, Steve Goodman



Photo courtesy Woody Minnich

Cactus • FEROCACTUS

Ferocactus is a genus of large barrel-shaped cacti, mostly with large spines and small flowers. There are about 30 species in the genus. They are found in the southwest United States and northwest Mexico. Most are solitary heads but a few such as *Ferocactus robustus* and *Ferocactus glaucescens* form clumps. All species have stout spines, some of them especially thick and heavy, and they may be hooked or straight. As desert dwellers, they can cope with intense heat and some frost, in their very arid habitat. Flowers come from the top of the plant, often forming right around the apex. Flowers vary from pink, yellow, red or purple depending on the species and



Ferocactus pottsii



Ferocactus glaucescens

are funnel shaped, between 1 and 2 inches in diameter. *Ferocactus* are desert dwellers and can cope with some frost and intense heat. The typical habitat is hot and very arid, and the plants have adapted to exploit water movement to concentrate their biomass in areas where water is likely to be present. *Ferocactus* typically grow in areas where water flows irregularly or depressions where water can accumulate for short periods of time. They are most often found growing along arroyos (washes) where their seeds have been subjected to scarification due to water movement, but they oddly also tend to grow along ridges in spots where depressions have formed and can hold water for some period of time.

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Woody is also known for his many presentations and photography. He is a recognized international speaker and has spoken for plant conventions. Woody has also authored a number of articles for various newsletters, the CSSA journal and his photographs are well published. Woody is the creator-originator of the first color version of the CSSA journal "Cacti and Succulents for the Amateur" that also featured show plants, shows and the growers of the pictured plants.

He is also known for his cactus and succulent nursery, Cactus Data Plants. CDP was started in 1975 and is still in operation today. Cactus Data Plants specializes in show specimens and rare cacti and other succulents with particular emphasis in Ariocarpus, Astrophytum, Mammillaria, Gymnocalycium, Turbinicarpus, Melocactus, Copiapoa, Fouquieria, Pachypodium, Euphorbia, Cyphostemma, Adenium and Adenia.

Woody and his wife Kathy live in the beautiful mountains south of Santa Fe New Mexico, in a region called Cedar Grove. He has a small 1,200 sq. ft. greenhouse and a few coldframes where he grows his unique plants. Woody is the proud parent of three children, Leah, Denver and Sarah, all of whom are now grown and out in the big world. He is a retired high school teacher of 32 years where he taught Graphic Arts, Architecture, Art and Health.

-bio supplied by Woody Minnich

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Next Meeting Monday July 27th, 7:00pm

Shepard Garden & Arts Center
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*For publication submissions email:
succulentcrazy@gmail.com by the 5th of the month*

ANNUAL COUNTRY STORE COMING SEPTEMBER!

Country Store Update: Wow, with the hot weather, our garden is growing like gangbusters. If you have bushels of produce and are thinking about making jams, relishes, canned tomatoes, etc., put up an extra jar or two for the Country Store Produce Table. Keep rooting those cuttings for the Cacti and Succulent Tables. Staying indoors and cleaning closets? Save your extraneous cacti/succulent themed items for the Silent Auction. All this happens at the September meeting!

–Marilynn Vilas, Chair

SUNSHINE REPORT

Sunshine: Know someone in the club under the weather (Aren't we all with this heat!). Let Marilyn Vilas know so she can send a cheer-up card. She can be reached by email or telephone (see roster).

SCSS MEMBERSHIP

Thank you succulent enthusiasts for renewing your membership! New guests are invited to join! Dues in the Society are \$15 per person and \$20 per family membership for one calendar year.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
SCSS (Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society)

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gingermartin@mac.com

MORE AMAZING PHOTOS FROM WOODY!

