

# Thorny Issues

Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society

August 2016

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## August Program

### GREEN LAWNS TO BEAUTIFUL DRY GARDENS—ERNESTO SANDOVAL

Having mowed many miles of lawn in his younger years, Ernesto has graduated to gardening with a diversity of plants and especially those from dry climates. He'll share both public and private examples of gardens where he converted lawn areas or areas formerly known as lawns to gardens with much more to offer. His garden style has always been naturalistic plantings, mixing Mediterranean climate plants with their neighbors from deserts in his designs.

As usual, he'll bring an assortment of rare, uncommon, and great to grow plants, including hardy Aloes, Dorstenia, and succulent surprises.



### Meeting Details

The Sacramento Cactus and Succulent Society meets the 4th Monday of each month at 7 PM.

Next meeting: August 22

Shepard Garden & Arts Center | 3330 McKinley Blvd | Sacramento, CA 95816

center phone: (916) 808-8800 | [www.sacramentocss.org](http://www.sacramentocss.org)



## August Mini-Show

### CACTUS: FEROCACTUS

The genus *Ferocactus* includes over 30 species, which can be found throughout the Southwest United States and Mexico. They are commonly known as “barrel cactus” due to their shape. Their name comes from the Latin “fero,” meaning “fierce,” due to the look of their spines. A good example of this is the “fishhook cactus,” *F. herrerae*. *Ferocactus* can withstand some frost and very intense heat. In the case of flash floods, they are able to grab onto debris or rocks and relocate themselves easily due to their shallow root system. *Ferocactus* are slow growing and need bright full light in order to keep their round appearance. When in bloom, they produce flowers ranging from yellow and orange to various shades of pink to red tones.

The flowers are arranged in a ring on the top of the plant. They tend to be prone to rot if excess water builds up. The variety *F. wislizeni* is known as the “compass barrel cactus” because the crown tends to tilt to the south. The flowers of this species can range from yellow to solid orange-red to orange petals edged in yellow.

Native Americans would eat the young flowers like cabbage and mash the older ones. The top of the plant could be cut off, and the inside contents could be scraped out. It could then be used as a cooking pot by adding hot stones and food. The spines were used as awls, sewing needles, and tattoo needles. A type of candy can also be made from the pulp.



*Ferocactus emoryi*

### SUCCULENT: PACHYPODIUM

The name *Pachypodium* comes from the Greek “pachus,” meaning thick, and “podion,” meaning foot. Plants in genus *Pachypodium* are a spine-bearing shrub or tree with thick trunks that are disproportionate to their height. The thick, jug-like trunks store up water and help the plants to survive during long dry periods. The most common species is *P. lamerei*, which is known as the Madagascar palm. *Pachypodium* are a perfect plant to form large underground caudiciforms, middle-sized, thick shrub-like forms, and dwarf forms with flattened bases above ground. *P. geayi* and *P. lamerei* can grow to tree-like heights. *P. saundersii* will eventually develop a



*Pachypodium lamerei*

thick, silvery trunk with spiny branches having clusters of flowers that are white with pink edges. They have a spicy smell and appear at the end of the spiny branches. They attract moths at night for pollination. Many *Pachypodium* are deciduous and lose their leaves in the fall. The sap of *Pachypodium* is poisonous but not caustic. When traveling to southern California, one can see *Pachypodium* in gardens growing as tall as trees. They are easy plants to grow and can tolerate a light frost, but they do best if kept under some shelter in frosty conditions. Many varieties are grown from seed.



## Announcements

**Tickle for your calendar!** Keith Taylor announced he would be bringing a very special Raffle Table for the November meeting. Seems he overbought at the San Diego Show, and we will be the recipients of his enthusiasm. Bring money!

**Country Store Reminder!** September's program (just a month or so away) is the much-anticipated Country Store. Start now to organize your donations of plants, produce, sweets, and Silent Auction goodies. This is a fundraiser for the club to support our activities so let's be generous. There will be more info at the August meeting and in next month's newsletter.  
—Marilynn Vilas

**Clay Pot Leftovers:** Keith Taylor will be bringing the remaining pots from the clay workshop. Those not picked up at the August meeting will be donated to the September Country Store.



Photo by Gerhard Bock

## July Mini-Show Winners

### CACTUS

- 1st: *Cylindropuntia ramosissima*, Peter Beiersdorfer  
2nd: *Opuntia macbridei* "Fat Boy," Troy Fajerson & Hal Cohenn  
3rd: *O. strobiliformis* "Spruce cone cactus" or *Tephrocactus diadematus*, Michelle Egan  
H.M.: *O. vestita x subulata*, Brandy Saige  
*O. vestita cristata*, Rudy Aguilar  
*O. subulata* montrose, Alex Inglett

### SUCCULENT

- 1st: *Euphorbia obesa* crest/montrose, Keith Taylor  
2nd: *Mammillaria* crest, Peter Beiersdorfer  
3rd: *Echeveria medusa* crested "Medusa Head," Michelle Egan  
H.M.: *Euphorbia spiralis cristata*, Rudy Aguilar  
*Echeveria agavoides* crested, Bobbie Handen  
*Echeveria* "Cassyz Winter," Linda Roye



Photo by Gerhard Bock

