



Thorny Issues

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Volume 54, #2

Final Step of DIY Project –Plant your Pot Monday, February 25th ♦ 7 pm

Well we've made our pots, we've glazed our pots, and this month it's time to plant our pots. And to give you enough strength to do that we are feeding you again.

February's meal will be lasagna, salad, and bread along with drinks and dessert. So this month be sure and remember to bring the plant you want in your newly finished pot and enough soil to plant it!



A BIG Thank You Keith Taylor, our Club's President! If you have enjoyed making, glazing and being able to plant our pots tonight, please be sure and let Keith know because without him we would never have done this project. So tonight we will all be able to fill our tummys, show off our creations and win raffle plants. So with all that said, I have the same message as

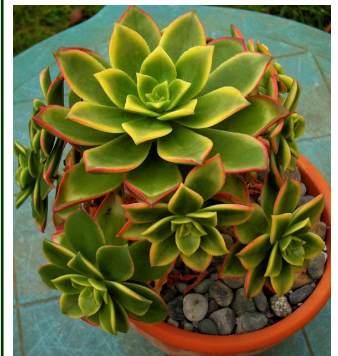
last month; our 'SCSS' is feeding you so the least you can do is bring some extra money & buy more raffle tickets!

And Lastly, our Cactus/Succulent Corner has been feeling a little neglected lately. You need to bring in those plants you have questions about. REMEMBER: When you bring in a plant you are having problems with or questions about; We All Learn! AND you get an extra Raffle Ticket.

– Sandy Water, Program Chair

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Aeonium haworthii variegata

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 pots you all created back in August are now complete and ready for your precious plants. That is the subject of this month's program. How to pot and stage – so it will be ready for the May Show. Some things you will need to bring; plants, soil, drain hole screen, topdressing, staging rocks and your questions.

Also for this month, raffle plants were acquired from *Arid Land*. I got a good variety, quite a few most have not seen available locally.

– Keith Taylor

Cactus — Ferocactus/ Leuchtenbergia

Ferocactus is a genus of large barrel-shaped cacti, mostly with large spines and small flowers. There are about 30 species included in the genus. They are found in the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico. The young specimens are columnar but as they grow older ribs form and they take on a barrel form. Most of the species are solitary but



Ferocactus glaucescens

some, such as *Ferocactus robustus* and *F. glaucescens*, form clumps. The flowers are pink, yellow, red or purple depending on the species, and the petals sometimes have a stripe of a darker color. They 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. Like *Sclerocactus*, *Ferocactus* typically grow in areas where



Leuchtenbergia principis

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. *Leuchtenbergia principis* (agave cactus or prism cactus), the sole species of the genus *Leuchtenbergia*, is a species of cactus. It is native to north-central Mexico (San Luis Potosi, Chihuahua). The genus is named after Maximilian Eugen Joseph (1817-1852), Duke of Leuchtenberg and amateur botanist. It is very slow-growing but can eventually grow up to 70cm high, with a cylindrical stem which becomes bare and corky at the base with age. It has long, slender, grayish-green tubercles 6-12cm long, with purplish-red blotches at their tips. The tubercles are topped with papery spines, making the plant resemble an agave; old, basal tubercles dry up and fall off. After four years or so, yellow, funnel-shaped flowers 5-6cm in diameter may be borne at the tubercle tips. The fruit is smooth and green, 3cm long and 2cm broad. It has a large, tuberous taproot.

Succulent — Aeonium/Echeveria/ Tacitus

Aeoniums originate from northern Africa and islands close by. They produce succulent rosettes of waxy leaves, generally at the end of naked stems. Depending on the plant, and the species, the leaves can have attractive variegations. Each rosette dies after blooming and setting seeds. In some species, since the plants do not produce any offsets or side rosettes, it will die completely after blooming. When the plants are getting older, it is often a good idea to cut and replant the terminal rosettes to prevent 'legginess.' *Echeveria* is a large genus of succulents in the Crassulaceae family. They are native from Mexico to northwestern South America. The genus *Echeveria* is named after the 18th century Spanish botanist Atanasio Echeverria Codoy. A large number of offsets heavily and are given the common name of 'Hen and Chicks'. Most species grow in the shade and can take some frost. All the species are drought resistant, but they grow better with regular deep watering and fertilizing. They can be propagated with offsets & leaf cuttings.

Tacitus is kept as a monotypic genus (one species only) as it just does not fit easily into its most closely related genus which is certainly *Graptopetalum*. The plant was discovered in 1972 by Dr. Alfred Lau who assumed it to be another *Graptopetalum* species, but close studies later proved it to be too different to accept in this genus. In the 1993 *Haseltonia*, Dr. Uhl lists these differences: "differing notably in its sepals that become reflexed, and in its unmarked petals that are wider distally, united below and then turn abruptly outward with outgrowths that tightly close the corolla tube. The flowers also lack the foetid (nauseating smell, as of decay) odor characteristic of *Graptopetalum* and doubtlessly are served by a different sort of pollinator, perhaps hummingbirds".



Tacitus bellus
"Chihuahua Flower"

Thought for the Month

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness:
only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate:
only love can do that."

— Martin Luther King Jr.



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

Kathy Rose & Dan Lane

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➤ MINI-SHOW WINNERS

What a great Mini-show! Thanks to all entrants for bringing such great & numerous plants for us to vote. Let's keep up showing lots of plants each month.

— Ellen Ragasa, Mini-Show Chair

Mini Show Winners — JANUARY, 2013

Cactus — Mammillaria

- 1st *Mammillaria klissingiana*, Michelle Egan
2nd *Mammillaria geminispinia*, Mary Schuett
3rd *Mammillaria cowperae* (=moellerana), Michael Lynch
HM *Mammillaria klissingiana*, Bill Hagbery
HM *Mammillaria sp.*, Bobbie Handen
HM *Mammillaria sp.*, Linda Hornstein
HM *Mammillaria sp.*, Kathy Rose
HM *Mammillaria coahuilensis*, Keith Taylor

Succulent — Aloe

- 1st *Aloe plicatilis*, Keith Taylor
2nd *Aloe aristata* (Torch plant), Michelle Egan
3rd *Aloe brevifolia*, Bill Hagbery
HM *Aloe 'Dorian Black'*, Bobbie Handen
HM *Aloe aristata* (Torch plant), Marilyn Lawson
HM *Aloe aristata* (Torch plant), Mary Schuett
HM *Aloe somaliensis*, Keith Smith

➤ MINI-SHOW 2012 — WINNER

Congratulations to Michelle Egan (again and again) for scoring the most plant entry points for the 2012 Mini-Shows! Remember points add up; 4 points, 1st — 3 points, 2nd — 2 points, 3rd — 1 point, H.M.

— Ellen Ragasa, Mini-Show Chair

➤ FIELD TRIP TO UC DAVIS BOTANICAL CONSERVATORY GREENHOUSES

For our field trip on February 2, our intrepid field trip coordinator Martha Bleshman had arranged for a very special tour of the UC Davis [Botanical Conservatory](#) greenhouses. Our tour was led by Ernesto Sandoval, the director of the Botanical Conservatory, with help from club member Barry Rice who volunteers at the Conservatory. Ernesto and Barry gave us an in-depth look of their collection. And what a collection it is! While our tour focused on succulents in all their diversity, the greenhouses are also home to many different tropical and subtropical plants.

Our tour started in the outside succulent area where we ooh'ed and aah'ed over table upon table of goodies.



There were aeoniums, agaves, aloes, crassulas, dudleyas, echeverias, gasterias, haworthias, kalanchoes as well as cacti and caudiciforms of every description.



Interspersed with the many different succulent genera were South African bulbs, some of which—like *Brunsvigia*

DATES & DETAILS — (CON'T)

josephinae – could pass as traditional succulents. More than a few members fell head over heels in love with these bulbs, especially the ones that were in bloom. It's easy to see why. Fortunately, several bulb species were for sale – at extremely fair prices to boot.



Plant on the left is *Brunsvigia josephinae* and the one on the right is *Boophane disticha*. Blooming below is *Lachenalia aloides*



Two aloes that caught my eye. The one on the left is *Aloe erinacea*, the one on the right didn't have a label.



Next, our tour moved inside into one of the heated greenhouses. The transition from the crisp outside air (55°

F, give or take) to a constant climate of 75°F+ and 80%+ humidity came as quite a shock. Within minutes people were starting to take off their jackets. But in light of the sheer variety of plants packed into this greenhouse, we didn't dwell too much on our physical discomfort.

Ernesto showed us one treasure after another, all the while entertaining us with amusing stories from the plant kingdom as well as a (bad) joke or two.



While most members were primarily interested in succulents, it was impossible not to be enchanted by many of the other plants inside the greenhouse. Just take a look at the begonia in the next photo and tell me you're not fascinated by it! Its leaves were soft and velvety, like a lamb's ear, but much firmer.



We also saw a cocoa tree with several pods that were almost ripe and got to taste vanilla seeds from their own plants.

DATES & DETAILS — (CON'T)

Leaving behind the hot and humid section of the greenhouse, we stepped into the heated but dry “African desert” room. It is jam-packed with all kinds of fantastical plants, including two very rare pachycauls from the island of Socotra off the coast of Yemen: the cucumber tree (*Dendrosicyos socotrana*) and the Socotran fig (*Dorstenia gigas*).



Thank you, Martha, for arranging such a fantastic field trip!

To see more photos from the field trip, visit my blog at <http://www.bambooandmore.info/2013/02/uc-davis-botanical-conservatory.html>.

– Gerhard Bock, Webmaster

➤ 35TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA



The 35th Biennial Convention of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America will be held in Austin TX, from June 15 - 20, 2013. All members of the Society are invited to join in the gathering which will feature world renowned authors and experts in the field of Cacti & Succulents. The web site for the Convention is located at <http://cssa2013.com>.

– Buck Hemenway, CSSA

➤ GARDEN TIP – CORKS ON TIPS

When transplanting spiky plants like agaves, put wine corks on the tips to avoid getting poked! This is great, looks like you have to drink eight bottles per plant.



Who knew gardening could be this much fun!
(Courtesy, www.mastergardner.com)



Another plant that attracted a lot of attention was *Welwitschia mirabilis*, voted the world’s ugliest plant in 2009 by readers of the Daily Telegraph in the U.K. The specimens at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory grow in tall chimney pipes. The reason is that *Welwitschia mirabilis* has a very long taproot to access underground water sources. Some sources suggest that this taproot can go as deep as 100 ft.

During our tour Ernesto and Barry pointed out plants that were for sale and after the tour they brought out additional trays of plants to choose from. I loved the fact that most of the plants that were for sale were unusual and even rare – and that the prices were more than reasonable. I went home with both a *Dendrosicyos socotrana* and a *Dorstenia gigas* as well as an *Aloe ramosissima*.

After the tour Barry showed us some fantastic outside plantings, including mature aloes and cycads from Africa, the Americas and Asia.



No soil, only
sphagnum moss
(Linda Eubanks, Design
for Serenity)

FIRST CLASS

Next Meeting Date ♦ Monday, February 25th

SACRAMENTO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

c/o Mara Aditajs, Editor

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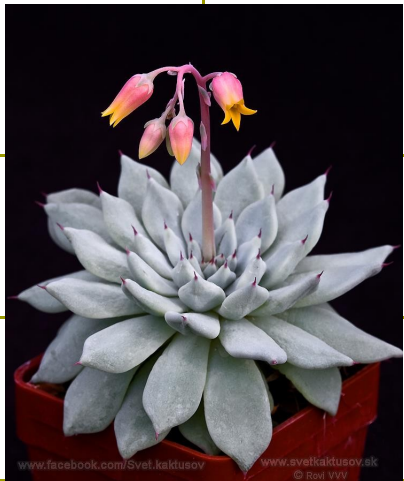



WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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

www.sacramentocss.org



MARCH, 2013

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						 <p><i>Echeveria cuspidata</i> var. <i>gemmula</i> (Courtesy Candace Suter, Sweetstuff's Sassy Succulents via Svet kaktusov a sukulentov)</p>
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