

Thorny Issues

Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society

June 2026 | Volume 8, Issue 06

Announcements

June Meeting:

June 22nd, 2026

6:15pm -9:15pm

Shepard Garden & Art
Center

Doors open at 6:15 for
plant sales and fellowship.
Program begins at 7 PM.

Open to the public.
No admission fee.
Free parking.
Refreshments served



This Months Contents:

June Program
Birthdays & New Members
Sunshine Corner
Mini Show
Members Corner



JUNE PROGRAM: J.D WIKERT AND THE GENUS MAMMILLARIA

J.D. is a former fisheries biologist and worked on restoration of habitat for salmon in California's Central Valley. He lives in Lodi, California. Previously, he worked in Florida sampling fish and doing lake restoration. He is a self-trained succulent hobbyist and usually has more than 150 flats of plants in his backyard. J.D. has been actively propagating succulent plants for over 20 years and has figured out how to kill most succulent species over that time. J.D. grew orchids when he lived in Florida and is now learning more about terrarium plants and carnivorous plants. He is a member of both the Sacramento and Stockton Cactus and Succulent Societies, and has served numerous terms as president for the Stockton Club. J.D. began doing presentations as a way to learn more about the cactus and succulent hobby.

J.D. will provide a broad overview of the cactus genus Mammillaria. The presentation will include information regarding taxonomy, distribution, cultivation, and propagation as well as providing pictures of many of the more readily available species. Be ready to answer when J.D. asks where in the world you find Mammillaria in their natural habitat. The presentation is structured to provide value to people of knowledge levels from beginner to expert.

If you are a regular club meeting attendee, You have likely seen J.D. give one of his many presentations. If you have a meeting and need a speaker about cactus and succulents or salmon restoration, please reach out to J.D. and let him know.

J.D. will bring plants to sell at the meeting. He can take cash or Venmo. If you actually read this and want to buy a plant, quietly tell J.D. "secret discount" and get \$1 of the price of a single plant. One discount per customer please. Please don't share the discount with others as this is to reward folks who actually read the newsletter.

Pics: JD in Iceland where there are not very many succulents, but a ton of moss and Mammillaria magnimamma taken at a the University of Padua Botanical Garden in Italy



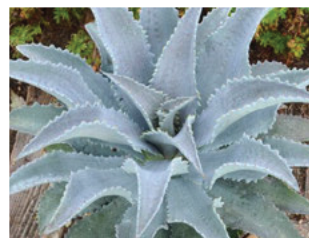
2026 Mini Show Schedule

Month	Cactus	Succulent
January	Rhipsalis	Kalanchoe
February	Frailea	Senecio
March	Stenocactus	Peperomia
April	Stetsonia	Lithops
May	May Show Wrap-up, No Mini-Show	
June	Gymnocactus	Mangave
July	Crested Cactus	Crested Succulent
August	Wilcoxia	Hoya
September	Country Store – No Mini Show	
October	Pilosocereus pachycladus	Agave
November	Spiral Cactus Spiral Succulent	
December	Holiday Dinner – No Mini Show	

Our gardens are starting to come alive with spring/summer blooms! Remember the prizes are given out at the December dinner. An entry needs to be one plant (with or without pups) in a pot. Dish gardens can be several plants of one species, or various species. Fanciful items, like fairy gardens are also welcome. Let's see more dish gardens! Each member can submit up to two plants for each entry. Also, please arrive on time to present your entries. I will not be putting out the beans to vote until 6:30 p.m., and voting ends when the speaker starts at 7 p.m. If you bring in your plant late, it really doesn't have a chance of being voted on!

See you at the June Meeting!

Linda Partmann



Gymnocactus And Mangave

Mangaves are plants formerly given the nothogenus name $\times$ Mangave. They are derived from hybridizing species in the genus *Agave* and the former genus *Manfreda*. *Manfreda* is now included in *Agave*, so the scientific name is obsolete. Mangaves are often employed as ornamental plants in dry environments, as they possess traits of durability found in both parents.^{[1][2]} Around 30–40 cultivars were available as of 2020.

The name $\times$ Mangave was first coined in 2005 by Tony Avent of Plant Delights Nursery and Carl Schoenfeld and Wade Roitsch of Yucca Do Nursery to describe two plants growing at Yucca Do Nursery in Hempstead, Texas. The plants originated from seed collected as *Manfreda* in the wild in Northern Mexico that were growing adjacent to plants of *Agave mitis* (*A. celsii*). Only two seedlings from the original seed batch were hybrids. Another cultivar of the plant, 'Bloodspot', was the product of breeding *Agave maculata* (then known as *Manfreda maculosa*) and *Agave macroacantha* in Japan.

Around the same time that 'Bloodspot' was being developed, these crosses were being made by others including Dr. John Lindstrom of the University of Arkansas and Tony Avent of Plant Delights Nursery/Juniper Level Botanic Garden in Raleigh, North Carolina. Two breakthroughs in the development of the hybrids came when Hans Hansen of Shady Oaks Nursery in Minnesota became the first person to successfully micropropagate mangaves.^[7] Both 'Bloodspot' and 'Macha Mocha' were tissue cultured in vitro, resulting in both becoming more widespread in cultivation. Tissue culture also resulted in two new cultivars derived from a mutation of 'Macho Mocha'. These were named 'Espresso' and 'Cappucino'.

Upon moving from Minnesota to Michigan to become a plant breeder for Walters Gardens, Hans Hansen dived deeper into mangave breeding, creating over 40 cultivars as of 2018.

Mangaves resemble compact, symmetrical agaves with succulent leaves. They typically grow to 8–24 in (20–60 cm) high and up to 18 in (50 cm) wide, although some can grow up to 4 ft (120 cm) high and 6 ft (180 cm) wide. The leaves of the plant are stiff, sometimes fragile, and variable in foliage color and patterns. Mangaves flower in June and July, producing brown flowers.

Gymnocactus And Mangave

Gymnocalycium: The species of the genus *Gymnocalycium* are low-growing, usually solitary or sometimes small cushion-forming plants with globose, depressed-globular to short-cylindrical stems. The 4 to 15 (rarely more) ribs are usually broadly rounded, often sinuous, occasionally warty, and often have a "chin" just below the areoles. The thorns are very variable.

The diurnal, funnel- or bell-shaped flowers appear at or near the apex. They are white or pink, sometimes yellow or bright red. The flower cup and the corolla are covered with a few large, broad and obtuse scales that have membranous edges. The areoles are bare. The perianth is usually spread.

The stamens form two circles. The first surrounds the nectar chamber, the second is attached near the opening of the corolla. The oblong to spherical fruits are dry or fleshy and spring up in various ways. A permanent flower residue adheres to them. The seeds are very variable. Their color ranges from brown to black, the size from quite small to relatively very large.

In cultivation they are popular for their easy flowering habits, and the flowers are generally brightly colored.



Meet The Newsletter Editor! Eve Milan

1. What piqued your interest in cacti/succulents?

I have always been an avid gardener, but cacti and succulents have a special place in my heart. I like their geometry, how hardy they are, and that they are well adapted for our region.

2. Role in the club and why.

I am the club Newsletter Editor. When I joined the club I wanted to find a way to contribute. I have been a graphic designer for 10 years, so it seemed like a great way to help out.

3. Favorite Cacti/succulent?

My Favorite cactus are Epiphyllum (orchid cactus). I love the large blooms, they are so striking. It took me a few years to figure out how to make them bloom. It was very rewarding when I finally got the conditions right!

4. Least favorite cacti/succulent or one you've killed the most?

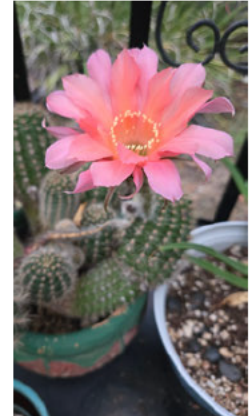
I have killed string of pearls many times. The two I have left look awful. I have more luck with string of bananas and dolphins. For some reason I just cant get string of pearls right!

5. Favorite local nurseries or gardens to visit?

(My picks are atmosphere based, because other members have covered all the great local cactus and succulent nurseries.) High-hand in Loomis is one of my favorite local places to visit! I also like Hortons Iris Garden when they are open for spring. If you are up for an adventure, try Filoli in the south bay area, super gorgeous house and grounds.

6. Advice for new cacti/succulent enthusiasts?

Dont be afraid you will kill a plant. That's how we learn. Its a little sad, but we can try again!



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