CSSA Affiliate

Succulent Scoop
Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society

April 2022 Volume 7 Number 4

Mission Statement:
The Conejo Cactus And Succulent Society encourages the study, cultivation, conservation, and appreciation of cacti and other succulent plants.

Email: ConejoCSS@hotmail.com Facebook: Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society Web: ConejoCSS.com

Next Meeting
Monday, April 4th
7:00 pm

BOARD MEETING
5:30 pm
before the regular meeting
All are invited to attend.
See Linda's message on page 2

California Lutheran University
Lundring Events Center
130 Overton Court
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
Doors Open at 6:30

Program
Conserving the rare *Dudleya* (Crassulaceae) taxa of the Santa Monica Mountains after the 2018 Woolsey Fire

By Matt Guilliams

In this talk, Matt will describe the Garden's multi-partner collaborative work to understand, protect, and restore the rare *Dudleya* taxa of the Santa Monica Mountains following the 2018 Woolsey Fire. Three Federally listed *Dudleya cymosa* taxa occur in the Santa Monica Mountains, as well as two morphological variants that have been treated as undescribed taxa. The majority of the populations of these dudleyas were within the Woolsey Fire burn scar, but it was unclear the extent to which they were impacted. Since the fire, the Garden has been working in collaboration with State, Federal, and local partners to assess fire impacts to dudleyas and *Dudleya* habitat, develop protocols for restoring the bryophyte communities on which many rely, and to bulk *Dudleya* seed for restoration work. Matt will report on the initial findings of their survey and impact assessment, as well as describe other progress to date.

Matt is a plant systematist and curator of the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden's Clifton Smith Herbarium. As a botanist/plant systematist, his overall focus is the study of the flora of California, which includes floristics, biodiversity description, inferring evolutionary patterns, and conservation genetics of rare plants. Matt earned his B.S. and M.S. in Evolutionary Biology at San Diego State University and his Ph.D. in Integrative Biology from U.C. Berkeley. He has been working as a botanist in the state since 1998.

Kristen oversees the Plant Genetics Lab at the Garden. She integrates field studies, molecular tools and histological techniques to document biodiversity and understand the interplay of ecological and evolutionary effects on plants of conservation concern. After receiving a M.S. at San Diego State University, Kristen earned her Ph.D. in Botany at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden and worked at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in the plant DNA barcoding lab. She has worked with California native plants since 2006.

April Refreshments — A - C

We are back to our regular meetings and are needing volunteers to supply our refreshment table

. . . SO . . .

This month we are asking people whose last names begins with **A - C** to bring treats and snacks for the refreshment table. However, anyone else is welcome to pitch in if they so desire.

President's Message

What a great March meeting we had. We had 75 attendees and a lot of new members. Our roster is back up again after having a little down slide during the first two years of Covid.

Speaking of rosters, this is the time we are going to put together and provide an electronic roster for all members to have access. At our April meeting we will be asking everyone what personal information (name, address, phone #, and email address) they do or do not want on the roster.

I know most of you are not CSSA (Cactus & Succulent Society of Americas) members and do not receive their Cactus and Succulent Journal, so I would like to pass along some pertinent information about conservation I found in the Spring issue of the journal.

According to the article written by The CSSA Conservation Committee—Conservation preserves biodiversity in a particular habitat. When habitats are stable, they help:

1. Maintain an adequate water supply
2. Maintain an adequate food supply
3. Ensure breathability of our air
4. Control land erosion

For me, this was a real eye-opener. Poaching is on the increase due to the number of people becoming interested in plant collecting as a hobby. This makes habitats more and more unstable. Cacti are one of the most endangered plant groups in the world, and desert ecosystems are the most vulnerable due to its delicate balance.

Our club, the CCSS, has the word 'conservation' in its Mission Statement. This shows we are a club that gets behind and supports conservation, but we need to do more than give lip-service to the concept. We, as a club, need to draft a Conversation initiative that produces tangible results.

I'm proposing that at our April meeting we put on our thinking caps and come up with suggestions and ideas to move this concept forward.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Encourage hobbyists to propagate by seed or vegetatively
2. Avoid purchasing field collected plants
3. Rescued plants to have an official tag, or some sort of other description, denoting it wasn't field collected. If a rescued plant does not have this tag–DO NOT PURCHASE IT
4. Only purchase plants from reputable dealers who sell plants from cultivated sources.

Plants need our help, so please come prepared.

Board Meeting

The CCSS is having a half-hour board meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, April 4th to discuss the upcoming April 24th plant sale. The meeting will be held before our regular meeting in the same room.

An invitation is being extended to all club members who would like to sit in and participate.

The purpose of the meeting is to come up with ideas and suggestions that will make this sale even better than those of the past.

Linda Holub
CCSS President

Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society

Est: 2016

Succulent & Cactus Plant Sale
Sunday, April 24, 2022

9:00 am - 4:00 pm
558 North Ventu Park Road
Thousand Oaks, CA, 91320
SE corner of Ventu & Hillcrest

Vendors will be offering
Cactus, Succulents, Bromeliads & Plumerias
Along with Pottery
and Jewelry

Experts will be available for
advice on growing and cultivation

Please bring boxes or bags to carry home your purchases.

For more information: Facebook: Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society
Web: ConejoCSS.com Email: ConejoCSS@hotmail.com

LACSS
The Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society
Since 1935

LACSS GARDEN TOUR

SIGN UP NOW!

SATURDAY, APRIL 9TH, 2022

We are looking forward to our first LACSS outing of the year with visiting the magnificent garden of Steve and Tiffani, located on 4 glorious acres at the top of Beverly Glen canyon. Since our last visit, Steve has installed a lower rock garden featuring large columnar cacti, Agaves, and many other unusual specimens. Other areas of the garden highlight aloes, cycads, and other succulents.

Because of limited parking, we are limiting attendance to 50 people total. We will visit in 2 groups, staggering arrival times. Please try to carpool. The trip is open only to LACSS members and 1 guest each, with a total of 25 guests for each group.

Group One: 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm **Group Two: 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm**

Please RSVP with your preferred time and number of participants to:

Jim Esterle, Special Events Director jimesterle@gmail.com or
direct any questions to Jim at 310-864-3224.

REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE THE ADDRESS 1 WEEK BEFORE THE OUTING.

CSSA Photo Contest

It is time to get out your cell phones, cameras
or other photography devices.
The Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA)
is holding its first ever national photo contest.

All photos © Irwin Lightstone

To celebrate and contemplate the plants we love, the CSSA is holding a photo contest open to CSSA members and the minor children of CSSA members. For the theme of **"The Artistry of Cacti and Succulents,"** you are invited to enter up to three images.

There are two divisions; adult (16 years and older), and youth (younger than 16 years). Prizes will be awarded in each of the divisions.

- First Place: $100.00 Gift Certificate from B&H Photo - Video, publication of the image in 'To the Point', and an 8 x 10 inch (approximate) print of the image.
- Second Place: $25.00 credit toward purchase at the CSSA Seed Depot, publication of the image in 'To the Point', and an 8 x 10 inch (approximate) print of the image.
- Third Place: Publication of the image in 'To the Point', and an 8 x 10 inch (approximate) print of the image.
- Honorable Mention: Publication of the image in 'To the Point'.

Deadline for entries is midnight PST, May 1, 2022. As there are no entry fees, you have nothing to lose! For more information about entry and the specific contest rules please visit the CSSA website home page.
http://cactusandsucculentsociety.org/photo_contest.html

2022 Plant of the Month

	Cactus	Succulent
January	Columnar cacti	Succulent Bulbs
February	Ferocactus	Aloe
March	Parodia (Notocactus)	Gasteria
April	Gymnocalycium	Pachypodium
May	Echinopsis	Euphorbia from Madagascar
June	Crested/Monstrose	Crested/Monstrose
July	Echinocereus	Agave
August	Mammillaria	Adenium
September	Eriosyce	Cyphostemma & Cissus
October	Copiapoa	Stapeliads (including Ceropegia)
November	Opuntia & relatives	Conophytum & Lithops
December	Favorites	Favorites

Plant of the Month (POM) What is this all about?

Each meeting of the CCSS will feature a friendly plant show/competition (POM). The goal of the POM is two fold.

- Introduce the membership to the various cactus and succulent genera and to open up a discussion on the culture, care, and display of these plants.
- Encourage members to share their plants with membership.

POM Submissions:

- Members may submit up to 3 three plants in each of the two categories (Cactus and Succulents). Plants entered in the Intermediate and Advanced Divisions must have been owned and maintained by the member for a minimum of one year. Plants entered in the Novice category may be newly acquired plants.

POM Divisions:

- **Novice:** 0-25 Total points ● **Intermediate:** 26-100 Total points ● **Advanced:** >100 Total Points
- When a member has accumulated the total number points in their Division, they will be moved up to the next higher Division in the following calendar year.

POM Judging Criteria:

- Plants are evaluated according to the following criteria:
- Condition (health, form, damage). 50%
- Maturity and size. 25%
- Staging (Artistic composition - container, stonework, etc). 20%
- Nomenclature (proper plant identification). 5%
- Additional criteria may include rarity, difficulty in growing, and whether the plant is in flower.

POM Judging:

- 1st place - 6 points ● 2nd place - 3 points ● 3rd place - 2 points
- All other entries will be awarded 1 point. Entry slips will be collected by the POM Coordinator for tabulation, record keeping, and publication in the CCSS Newsletter.

We are encouraging all members to participate in the POM. This is your opportunity to show off your prized treasures or to possibly learn how to better care for your plants.

See you at the next meeting
CCSS Board

Cactus of the Month: Gymnocalycium

Gymnocalycium horstii

Gymnocalycium are among the most popular of cacti, from the novice through the advanced grower. Probably every cactus collector in the world has at least one in their collection. With over 70 species and hundreds of varieties, cultivars, and hybrids there is something for everyone!

There are several reasons for the popularity of the genus. They are easy to grow; flower readily; come in a large number of distinguishable species; look great in flower, in bud, and even when dormant. A well grown plant will often flower several times during the year. Among novice growers, the most popular *Gymnocalycium* is undoubtedly the grafted cultivars of *G. mihanovichii* that lack chlorophyll (the green pigment in plants that lets them photosynthesize). These cultivars come in bright yellows, reds, oranges, and even pink. These plants certainly are stunning, but you almost never see a mature plant because they are quite difficult to grow and, quite frankly, many serious collectors see it as something of a freak of nature and not a desirable addition to a collection.

Gymnocalycium is an old genus, first named in 1845. It is so named for the spineless flower buds in all species (*Gymnocalycium* translates to "Naked calyx"). Most *Gymnocalycium* are also readily identified by their 'chins' beneath the areoles. All *Gymnocalycium* are from South America, with the center of distribution in Argentina. The genus stretches into Southeastern Bolivia, Western Paraguay, Uruguay, and into the Southernmost part of Brazil. For the most part *Gymnocalycium* are grassland plants, growing and shaded in the grass of the Pampa and Chaco (dry forest) that covers much of Argentina. As a result, most like some protection from full afternoon sun, but need bright light during the day.

Gymnocalycium pflanzii

Gymnocalycium ragonesei

Gymnocalycium cultivation is easy. They need a dry rest during the winter; they can take Southern California climate without winter heat, as long as they are dry. They should be fed regularly with half strength fertilizer when growing. They are tolerant of any well drained soil, but constant wet will cause the roots to rot. Fortunately, they are easy to re-root, with roots generally re-growing in a just few months. *Gymnocalycium* are easy to grow from seed, started in a well drained, damp potting mix in a plastic bag covered pot. Germination is fairly rapid, but growth during the first year is slow compared to most *Mammillaria* and many other genera. Vegetative propagation is also easy. Offsets from clumps can be removed, left to dry for a few days and potted. They generally root within a few weeks.

-Kyle Williams
Photo credits: Kyle Williams

Succulent of the Month: *Pachypodium* of Madagascar

When most people think of *Pachypodium* they think of Madagascar for good reason. Of the 30 plus species known to science, all but 5 come from there. The rest come from Southern Africa. Some species look like they come from a desert (e.g. *P. brevicaule*), while many others would look as much at home in a tropical landscape as in a desert (e.g. *P. lamerei*). That shouldn't be surprising as Madagascar really is a tropical island, just one with deserts, rainforests, and everything in between!

Pachypodium horombense

That means every species you see comes from Madagascar, except: *P. namaquanum, P. succulentum* (including *P. griquense*)*, P. bispinosum, P. saundersii & P. lealii*. Interestingly, these African plants tend to be a bit easier to grow on the whole, possibly due in part to more tolerance of our cool winters.

Pachypodium namaquanum

Pachypodium belongs to the Apocynaceae, one of the largest of all plant families as well as one of the families with the most species of succulents. It is closely related to *Adenium*, Stapeliads, *Fockea*, Oleanders, Milkweeds, Plumeria, and many other non-xeric plants. While most similar to *Adenium*, *Pachypodium* can be distinguished from it by having spines, and usually by flower color. While pinks and reds are extremely common in *Adenium*, only a few *Pachypodium* have red or pink in their flowers. *Pachypodium* also stands out from most of the family, including *Adenium*, in having alternate leaves (one leaf at each node) while the rest of the family (usually) has opposite leaves (paired leaves).

Have you ever given thought to how plants end up where they are and why some places have more species than others? The distribution of *Pachypodium* may lead you to consider that. Why are there so many more (4-5x) as many species in Madagascar than in the whole of continental Africa? It must be because *Pachypodium* evolved in Madagascar, right? Possibly, but it is equally likely that it evolved in Africa but didn't diversify greatly there, but when a single plant arrived in Madagascar it rapidly spread around the island then became isolated in different habitats which over time evolved into different species. In other words, a center of diversity for a plant group today doesn't necessarily mean that's where the group originated. In one location the conditions may have allowed for tall, tree like, species to form (e.g. *P. lamerei & P. geayi*) while in other places, such as very dry rocky hills, small very xeric species may have been better adapted. Yes, Africa also has lots of different habitats, but it may have had to compete with many other plants already there while Madagascar might have had less plants at the time, making it easier for *Pachypodium* to thrive and diversify. Recent research into the relationships of *Pachypodium* suggest this may well be what happened!

Cultivation of *Pachypodium* is generally easy. Most like constant moisture (not wet though!) during the growing season. When they drop their leaves in the winter keep dry. Some species, like *P. brevicaule* are more water sensitive than others. The biggest difference between African and Madagascar species is in cold tolerance. In general, African species can tolerate more cold, while Madagascar species need to at least be kept above freezing, with some species only thriving if kept above 50 degrees. *P. lamerei* is the biggest exception in that it is a Madagascar species that can tolerate the occasional light frost in our region.

Pachypodium brevicaule

-Kyle Williams
Photo Credits: Kyle Williams & Daederot

PLANT OF THE MONTH (POM) WINNERS
March 2022

Cactus - Parodia

Novice:		
1st	Parodia sp.	Susan Krevitt
2nd	Notocactus uebelmannianus (Parodia werneri)	Ryan Ripley
3rd	Parodia sp.	Michelle Paz
Intermediate:		
1st	*Notocactus magnificus*	Ann Hopkinson
2nd	*Parodia aureicentra*	Glen & Pam Smith
3rd	*Parodia magnifica*	Marquita Ellias
Advanced		
1st	*Parodia magnifica*	Linda Holub
2nd	*Parodia turecekiana*	Linda Holub

Succulents - Gasteria

Novice		
1st	*Gasteria x* 'Green Ice'	Lisa Gailey
2nd	*Gasteria sp.*	Ryan Ripley
Intermediate:		
1st	*Gasteria bicolor* var. *liliputana*	Ann Hopkinson
2nd	*Gasteria* hybrid (Bill Baker P7)	Melinda Hines
3rd	*Gasteria* 'Little Warty'	Melinda Hines
Advanced		
1st	*Gasteria* 'Green Ice'	Linda Holub
2nd	*Gasteria obtusifolia* (syn. for *G. disticha)*	Linda Holub
3rd	*Gasteria* 'Crosby's Crocodile'	Bryan Chan

February 2022 POM, good to be back live again. February was another month of great participation. Keep those treasures coming. There were 32 entries in all, 8 Novice, 17 Intermediate, and 7 Advanced. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all that participated.

*** In an effort to help us keep accurate tabulation and avoid confusion of POM entries, please be sure to select the appropriate color POM information card (red = Novice, yellow = Intermediate, and blue = Advanced) and write your information legibly. And, please leave the cards on the table when you pick up your plants.

CCSS 2022 Officers

President
Linda Holub

1st VP, Programs
Ann Hopkinson

2nd VP, POM & Education
Kyle Williams

3rd VP, Special Events
Donna Pachorek

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Drawing Coordinator
Gerry Caruso

Website
Tim Alvord

Librarian
Glen Smith

Plant Propagation
Terry Wilson

Event Publicity
Donna Pachorek

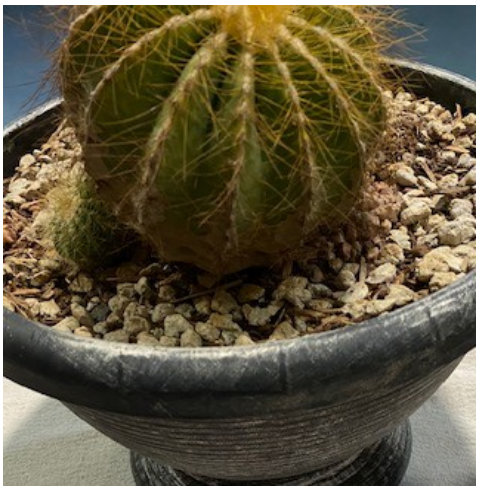
CCSS Mailing Address: 530 Los Angeles Ave. Ste #115-183, Moorpark, CA 93021

Winners - March Cactus of the Month - *Parodia*

BEGINNER

1st Place
Parodia sp.
Susan Krevitt

2nd Place
Notocactus ubelmannianus
(Parodia werneri)
Ryan Ripley



3rd Place
Parodia sp.
Michelle Paz

INTERMEDIATE

1st Place
Parodia magnificus
Ann Hopkinson

2nd Place
Parodia aureicentra
Glen & Pam Smith

3rd Place
Parodia magnificus
Marquita Ellias

ADVANCED

1st Place
Parodia Magnifica
Linda Holub

2nd Place
Parodia turecekiana
Linda Holub

Winners - March Succulent of the Month - *Gasteria*

BEGINNER

1st Place
Gasteria 'Green Ice'
Lisa Gailey

2nd Place
Gasteria sp.
Ryan Ripley

3rd Place
Gasteria sp.
Ann Powers

INTERMEDIATE

1st Place
Gasteria bicolor var *liliputans*
Ann Hopkinson

2nd Place
Gasteria - Bill Baker hybrid P7
Melinda Hines

3rd Place
Gasteria - 'Little Warty'
Melinda Hines

ADVANCED

1st Place
Gasteria 'Green Ice'
Linda Holub

2nd Place
Gasteria obtusifolia
Linda Holub

3rd Place
Gasteria 'Crosby's Crocodile'
Bryan Chan