



Succulent Scoop

Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society

November 2022

Volume 7 Number 11

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, November 7th
7:00 pm

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

Program: Plants, Staging and Pottery By Keith "Kitoi" Taylor

San Francisco Bay Area born and raised, Keith "Kitoi" Taylor has been a renowned cactus and succulent collector for over 30 years, as well as an established potter. Keith has an extensive collection of many specimens of rare and collectible plants. He was interested in showing his plants at Cactus and Succulent club shows but was never satisfied with the containers available. About 12 years ago, he began making his own pots. The unique styles and dynamic textures of his pottery play off the natural tones and textures of his specimen plants. Keith creates one-of-a-kind habitat style vessels to showcase the beauty of his plants and the natural elements of his pottery. He is currently a member of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, CSS of Sacramento, CSS of San Francisco, CSS of San Gabriel, CSS of Los Angeles, CSS of San Diego and Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society.



Refreshments



For refreshments, we're asking everyone to sign up for something randomly. Come to <http://whosbringingwhat.com/ccss> and see what's already on the table. If we need more, sign up. If not, wait until next time. Like last time, we will have a Keurig machine up and running. In the hot summer months, please consider bringing your own cold drink. Managing cases of water is heavy and leads to a lot of plastic waste. —Terry Wilson



President's Message

Happy Fall,

Thankfully the weather has finally cooled off, and it's beginning to feel like Fall.

Speaking of cooler weather, I was talking to some people at our recent sale and realized many people don't know they shouldn't water cacti in the winter. Up until four years ago, I was the same. I was watering my cacti and succulents all year round. Then someone told me, "Never water cacti in the winter. It's their dormant period. They're sleeping and don't need water." So, I decided to give it a try. At first, it was really hard. Due to habit, I wanted to water everything at the same time. Having to hold back watering my cacti was hard to get used to, but when Spring arrived and I resumed watering, I noticed an immediate difference. My cacti were plumper, greener, healthier, and had more blooms than the previous year. So, from December-March, my cacti go dry. Give it a try. You'll be pleasantly surprised.

Having just concluded our fall sale, I want to thank everyone who volunteered to help. Without your splendid efforts, it could not have happened.

Foot traffic was lighter than previous sales, and we attribute it to many factors: too close to Halloween, high gas prices, the crazy housing market, and stocks being down. Even though there were 3 fewer vendors (all had to cancel at the last minute), we and many of our vendors were pleased with the sales. The results will be announced at the November meeting.

Another topic for discussion at the November meetings will be ideas for our upcoming December Holiday Party. We are thinking about a pot-luck dinner, a gift exchange, and a live auction, but we are still deciding. So please come prepared to provide input. We want to make this party the best ever.

NOTE: Due to the elections, the November meeting will be in the Arena—right behind the room we're in now. There will be signs and volunteers to direct members to the right room.

Linda Holub
President CCSS



CCSS Fall Sale





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: *Opuntia* and Close Relatives

Opuntia is one of the largest genera of the Cactaceae (cactus family) and is the most common type of cactus in North America. Plants in this genus form jointed stems that to many look like leaves (but aren't). The most distinctive (and reviled) feature of *Opuntia* are "glochids", tiny hair like spines that stick in your skin even if you just brush against the plant lightly. Always have tweezers ready when *Opuntia* are near! Jointed stems and glochids are found in most of the Opuntioideae, which consists of *Opuntia* and several closely related genera (see below).

For the sake of the "Plant of the Month" we will include *Opuntia* and its close relatives. This includes *Austrocylindropuntia*, *Cumulopuntia*, *Peresklopsis*, *Quiabentia*, *Brasilopuntia*, *Miqueliopuntia*, *Tacinga*, *Tunilla*, *Pterocactus*, *Puna*, *Maihuniopsis*, and *Tephrocactus*, and the Chollas (*Cylindropuntia*).



Tephrocactus geometricus

Opuntia (in the broad sense) covers the largest geographical range of any cactus, stretching from Southern Argentina to Canada, and covers all of the Caribbean islands and Pacific Islands from the Galapagos to the Catalinas. It is naturalized on every continent except Antarctica. It is a pest and a noxious weed in many places, and is displacing native vegetation in parts of Africa, Asia, Madagascar and Australia.

The taxonomy of *Opuntia* is quite complex and is bound to keep plant taxonomists busy for years to come! Some of the genera I mentioned above are widely accepted while others are accepted by some and others consider them part of a larger *Opuntia*. Most of the recent changes in the *Opuntia* group is due to recent DNA phylogeny studies of the species.



Opuntia 'Sunburst'
Variegated

Propagation of all *Opuntias* is most easily accomplished by cuttings. All cuttings root easily. Seed propagation requires patience, with seed scarification and sometimes artificial wintering by keeping the seed damp and cold in the refrigerator required. Seed germination can be erratic, with seeds from the same plant sometimes germinating in days, and sometimes not for months or years.

Handling of *Opuntias* is somewhat of a problem due to their glochids. Handling with steel tools is the best bet. Gloves get covered with glochids, which invariably end up in your hands when the gloves come off. Glochids can often be removed by washing with a strong hose stream. Plucking with tweezers is the most effective, especially if you use a good magnifying glass. Other options include brushing, duct tape and rubber cement.



Puna clavarioides

Kyle Williams
Photo Credits: Kyle Williams

Succulent of the Month: *Lithops* and *Conophytum*

For this month's succulent we look at two superficially similar genera that differ in some important ways, *Lithops* and *Conophytum*. They both belong to the mesemb family, Aizoaceae, and both are small clumping plants that are essentially two fat fleshy leaves with roots.

Everyone is familiar with, *Lithops*, the Living Stones even if they've never grown them. There are approximately 36 species of *Lithops*, all of which have the same basic form of a small, stemless, fat plant with patterning on top and a fissure down the middle that is mostly buried in the soil. What makes the genus so interesting is how much variation you can have within an extremely similar basic body plan. Leaves can be green, brown, orange, red, gray and other colors. The patterning can be anything from small lines to large mosaic windows, to even polka dots.



Lithops otzeniana

All *Lithops* are native to southern Africa. In terms of countries, virtually every wild *Lithops* is native to either South Africa or Namibia. A few small populations are known from Botswana as well. This range makes sense with *Lithops* preference for arid regions with low humidity and comparatively cooler nights than you'd find further north in the more tropical zones. They prefer to grow in open rocky areas with mineral soils in full sun. Exceptions exist, but in cultivation all species have similar requirements, though some are touchier to mistreatment than others.



Conophytum ectypum

Conophytum has a similar number of species as *Lithops*, but *Lithops* has more varieties and forms in cultivation, making it seem like a bigger genus. *Conophytum* come from the winter rainfall regions of South Africa and Namibia. The best way to tell *Conophytum* apart from *Lithops* is to look at the leaves. In *Lithops* you have two distinct leaves, while in *Conophytum* the leaves are fused together with just a small pore or slit in the center from which the flowers emerge. *Conophytum* forms a dry papery sheath around itself when dormant while *Lithops* never does and in fact never truly goes dormant. Another clue is that *Conophytum* are winter growers while *Lithops* are most active in summer and fall. This feature is an adaptation to the areas they grow in the wild; *Lithops* in summer rainfall regions and *Conophytum* in winter rainfall zones. Additionally, *Conophytum* flowers have petals united into a tube at the base and "bracts" (small scale or leaf like growths) on the tube. *Lithops* have no tube or bracts.

While *Lithops* and *Conophytum* like full sun in their native habitat, they like protection from hot afternoon sun in cultivation. Why is this? For one, we like to grow them higher than they would be in the wild. By that I mean that we pot them up so that most of the leaves are above soil while only the very base and roots are below soil. In nature the plants are mostly below the soil with only the very tops of the leaves exposed. That means more of the plant is exposed to the hot sun. Also, in a pot the soil can heat up quite a bit, stressing the roots. In the wild you usually only see the tops of the plants sticking up out of the soil. That means most of the plant is protected from the sun. As the sun can only heat the very uppermost layer of soil, most of the plant is insulated from the heat. During dormancy in the hottest times of year the plant shrinks down even further, almost completely sinking below the soil in some cases. Interestingly, the tops of *Lithops* and some *Conophytum* are often windowed which allows filtered sun throughout the plant. This means even parts of the plant below the soil can photosynthesize.



Lithops leslei v. *rubrobrunnea*

-Kyle Williams
Photo Credits: Kyle Williams

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PLANT OF THE MONTH (POM)

October, 2022

Cactus - Copiapo

Novice:

1st	<i>Copiapo haseltoniana</i>	Ryan Ripley
2nd	<i>Copiapo cinerea</i>	Ryan Ripley
3rd	<i>Copiapo cinerea</i>	Ryan Ripley

Intermediate:

1st	<i>Copiapo laui</i>	Ann Hopkinson
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Advanced:

1st	<i>Copiapo griseoviolacea</i>	Bryan Chan
2nd	<i>Copiapo gigantia</i>	Linda Holub
3rd	<i>Copiapo sp.</i>	Linda Holub

Succulents - Stapeliads, Ceropegia

Novice:

1st	<i>Huernia sp.</i>	Susan Krevitt
2nd	<i>Huernia kirkii</i>	Susan Krevitt

Intermediate:

1st	<i>Ceropegia fuscia</i>	Marquita Ellias
2nd	<i>Stapelia asterias</i>	Tom Horan

Advanced:

1st	<i>Larryleachia cactiformis</i>	Bryan Chan
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POM is one of the educational segments of our club meetings. Our POM mini show allows the membership to become better acquainted with the different succulent plant genera and how to effectively care for and stage them. Get involved and enter those plants.

The October meeting had 15 POM entries, 7 Novice, 3 Intermediate, and 5 Advanced. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all that participated.

October Cactus POM - Copiapoa

Novice



1st Place
Copiapoa haseltoniana
Ryan Ripley



2nd Place
Copiapoa cinerea
Ryan Ripley



3rd Place
Copiapoa cinerea
Ryan Ripley

Intermediate

1st Place
Copiapoa laui
Ann Hopkinson



Advanced



1st Place
Copiapoa griseoviolacea
Bryan Chan



2nd Place
Copiapoa gigantia
Linda Holub



3rd Place
Copiapoa sp.
Linda Holub

October Succulent POM - *Stapeliads*, *Ceropegia*

Beginner



1st Place
Huernia sp.
Susan Krevitt



2nd Place
Huernia Kirkii
Susan Krevitt

Intermediate



1st Place
Ceropegia fusca
Marquita Ellias



2nd Place
Stapelia asterias
Tom Horan

Advanced

1st Place
Larryleachia cactiformis
Bryan Chan

