

Succulent Scoop Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society

CSSA Affiliate

February 2024

Volume 9 Number 2

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 Wednesday February 7th Doors Open at 6:30 Meeting starts at 7:00

California Lutheran University - Lundring Events Center 130 Overton Court Thousand Oaks, CA. 91360

Belize—'You Won't Belize It'





by Linda Holub

Linda's interest in cacti and succulents began thirty years ago. In Linda's words, "I killed them with kindness and over watering". When Linda moved to California in 1988 her interest was renewed. Her interest continued to grow, and when she joined the LACSS (Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society) in 2011 she was hooked. Through trial, error, and meeting like-minded people Linda's knowledge grew, and today she has over 600 different species of cacti and succulents in her collection. In 2015 Linda and four members of the LACSS saw a need for a club in Ventura County and formed the Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society. The club has grown to over one hundred and thirty members, and is one of the fastest growing (if not the fastest growing) clubs in the U.S. Linda and her husband went on a six-day vacation to Belize. They found that the resort where they were staying had the largest botanical garden in Belize. Linda learned that the garden was the pet project of Ella, the wife of the resorts owner. Before meeting Ella, Linda had the opportunity to explore the garden on her own; but after she introduced herself to Ella as the president of the CCSS, Ella arranged for a private tour conducted by David, the gardens curator.

Linda will be talking about and showing pictures of many of the extraordinary succulents and plants native to Belize. The presentation will also feature pictures of native wildlife, Mayan ruins, and cave formations.

President's Message February 2024

Dear Members,

It is with deep sadness I write my message for this month's newsletter. Our fellow member, and dear friend Darwin Harrell passed away January 12, 2024. Darwin and Gerry Caruso, his partner, made a great team for 30 years and were long time members of CCSS. Darwin attended most meetings and field trips. At our monthly meetings, Darwin always bought drawing tickets and there were few nights he didn't leave with a plant(s) he'd won.

Rest in peace Darwin. You will be missed by everyone.





Now moving on to a happier subject—our February 21St field trip to the Kingdom of Plants Nursery in Carpinteria. Not only does Joe Ambriz, the owner, have several green houses with rare and exotic cacti and succulents, he has an extensive array of orchids and other plants at extremely reasonable prices.

We will be having lunch at the nursery, so only bring your lunch if you don't like pizza.

I've heard from a reliable source Joe will be having a plant drawing for us, so it should be a fun day, that you won't want to miss.

Carpooling is encouraged. The location will be announced at our February meeting.

Linda Holub, President, CCSS

AMBRIZ Kingdom of Plants Joe Ambriz -Family owned nursery in Carpinteria CA. Passion for Rare and unique plants, Orchids, Tillandsia, cactus, and succulents.

Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society NEW MEETING SCHEDULE for 2024

Starting with January 3, 2024 we will now be meeting on the first Wednesday of every month.



February 7th
March 6th
April 3rd
May 1st
June 5th
July 3rd
August 7th
September 4th
October 2nd
November 6th
December 4th

Refreshments 2024

February 2024 - members whose last names begin with C and D, please bring refreshments to share with the club.

In every monthly newsletter there will be a posting on who's turn it is to bring refreshments. We go alphabetically by last name.





Thank you for your participation by bringing in refreshments!



CCSS 2024 Officers

President Linda Holub

1st VP, Programs
Donna Pachorek

2nd VP, POM & Education
Kyle Williams

Ttyle Williams

3rd VP. Special Events Lisa Gailey Treasurer

Chris Gailey

Secretary

Ryan Ripley

Director I, Membership

Glen Smith

Assistant to Director I

Pam Smith, Membership

Director II, EducationTerry Wilson

Scoop Editor

Ann Hopkinson

Hospitality

Julie Cox & Liz Gollner

Drawing CoordinatorGerry Caruso

Website

Tim Alvord

Librarian

Glen Smith

Propagaton

Terry Wilson

Event Publicity
Lisa Gailey



Volunteering is necessary to the well-being of any club or organization.

Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society needs volunteers to keep the club going since the club is run exclusively through volunteer efforts. Volunteering allows you to connect to the Conejo Cactus and Succulent Community and help make a better club for all.

5 personal benefits of volunteering

- 1) Gaining new skills
- 2) Making new friends
- 3) Mental and physical health and well-being
- 4) Giving something back
- 5) Improving your confidence

Please contact Linda Holub <u>cactuscougar@icloud.com</u> or Ann Hopkinson <u>HopkinsonACO4@gmail.com</u>



IMPORTANT! MEMBERSHIP DUES MUST BE PAID NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 7TH.

If there are no changes to your membership information, you can write a check and mail it to:

CONEJO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

530 W. Los Angeles Ave Suite 115-183

Moorpark, CA 93021

IF YOU HAVE NAME, ADDRESS, EMAIL, PHONE CHANGES, PLEASE FILL OUT A NEW MEMBERSHIP FORM.

MEMBERSHIP FORMS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE NEXT MEETING.

THERE IS A MEMBERSHIP FORM INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER.



INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP: \$25.00 FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: \$30.00 STUDENT MEMBERSHIP: \$20.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF CCSS.

FREEBIE Table - Etiquette



The freebie table is a popular part of our monthly meetings and we want to continue sharing our cuttings.

We are lucky to have such a nice room for our meetings. We need to endeavor to keep it clean and tidy.

- * If you bring plants for the freebie table and no one takes them, PLEASE take them home.
- * There are no trash cans available for plant material, especially spiny and thorny cuttings.
- * Clean your cuttings before bringing them in for the freebie table. Wash off any dirt or dead leaves.
- * If we all follow this simple etiquette, the freebie table cleanup will not be left to other members.
- * Be courteous to others bring in clean plants and take home all the plants you bring.



Membership Form

	_ New Membership	н	enewai		_ Badge Order
Nan	ne:			Date:	
Add	itional Family Member(s)				
Add	itional Family Member(s)				
	_ U	se back of page if	necessary:		
Add	ress:				
	:				
Email:		Phone:			
	Individual Membership:	\$ 25.00			
	Family Membership:	\$ 30.00			
	Student Membership:	\$ 20.00			
	Name Badge*	\$ 15.00			
тот	AL:	\$			
	ne Badge Orders: Please ge/s to read:		-	-	ur name
Plea	ase check box(s) containi Phone number Address Email	ng the informa	ation you wo	uld like on c	our club roster.

Contact: Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society at: 530 W. Los Angeles Ave. Suite 115-183 Moorpark, CA. 93021, or conejocss@hotmail.com

Revised: 1-19-2023

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Aloe-Kyle Williams Photo Credits: Kyle Williams



Aloe x 'Bee's Pink'

Aloe is one of the most popular genera of succulents, especially in Southern California. In fact, Aloe vera may be the most widely cultivated succulent in the world, owing to its medicinal properties. Most species are small herbs to shrubs, though some species (most notably A. dichotoma and A. barberae) can reach tree size. With over 500 species, and at least as many hybrids and cultivars, there is an Aloe for almost any situation and taste.

Aloe species are native to most of the drier parts of Africa, including Madagascar, with a number reaching the Arabian Peninsula. They are naturalized in every Mediterranean environment in the world, as well as some temperate and tropical regions. All but a few Aloes will grow readily in Southern California, either in the ground, or in pots. When in

the ground they require minimal care, existing happily on only natural rainfall in most years. Summer growing species will appreciate some summer water. The sheer number of species and habitats make blanket statements on culture impossible, but most will thrive under the general care you give other succulents, so long as you know if you have a summer or winter grower.

Aloe combines interesting form and foliage with beautiful flowers. Most species have orange, yellow, or red flowers that are attractive to Sunbirds in their native Africa. In the Americas Hummingbirds regularly visit them. These birds are great at pollinating flowers, and it isn't unusual to see fruit develop. Those looking for other colors can find species with white or even green flowers. Some species, such as A. tomentosa, even have hairy flowers!

Given that *Aloe* is such a large and diverse genus it may not surprise you that modern taxonomic studies are showing that some *Aloe* species are best split off into distinct (but still related) smaller genera. The reason for this isn't just to make life more difficult for you! A genus should contain only species that are more closely related to each other than any are to species outside the genus. When we find out that some species in a genus are more closely



Aloe erinacea

related to species outside the genus taxonomists have two choices. Either you combine everything into one big genus, or you split the problematic species out of the genus. DNA research has shown that if we want to keep all the species we currently think of as *Aloe* in the genus *Aloe* then we have to put a bunch of other species in the genus as well. That doesn't just mean a couple obscure species no one has ever heard of. Instead, it would require putting all of *Haworthia* and *Gasteria* (among others) into *Aloe* itself.



Aloe suprafoliata

If you want to keep *Haworthia* and *Gasteria* as their own genera (though they have their own issues we won't discuss here) then you have to be willing to split out a few Aloes from *Aloe*. Thankfully the vast majority of traditional *Aloe* species are still in *Aloe* and less than 20 species have to be removed from the genus. The most notable segregate genus is *Aloidendron* which are easy to recognize as they constitute 6 tree or shrub species including *A. barbarae*, *A. dichotomum*, & *A. ramosissimum*.

The largest segregate genus with 10 species is *Aloiampelos*, which tends to be shrubby or climbing species. The third genus *Kumara* was created for the well-

known *Aloe plicatilis* (now *Kumara plicatilis*) and one other similar species. For the sake of our Plant of the Month show you can submit plants from all four "Aloe" genera: *Aloe, Aloiampelos, Aloidendron,* and *Kumara.*



Plant of the Month: Columnar Cacti

Kyle Williams

Photo Credits: Kyle Williams, Ken Lund, Frank Vincentz, Raffi Koijan, & Bernard Gagnon

Columnar cacti are a highly heterogeneous group defined by growth form rather than any natural grouping or relationship. As such, there is very little that unifies the group outside of growth form, which can roughly be defined as an upright, mostly self supporting, cactus that is at least 3-4x as tall as wide. Implied in this definition is that the "column" is largely unjointed, thereby excluding cacti such as *Opuntia* and *Schlumbergera*. Even so, we are left with a vast array of cacti that are anywhere from a few inches to over 50 feet tall, ranging from the United States all the way down to southern South America, with cold tolerance ranging from highly frost sensitive to those that can be frozen solid for the winter without harm. To add confusion to the mix, some species start out as globular but after many years become columnar. For example, *Astrophytum* species are usually seen in shows as globular, or short columnar plants at most. However, at the Huntington Garden you can see examples *Astrophytum* in the ground that are several feet tall! There is at least one other rule of thumb that can help you decide if you have a columnar cactus. Does it have "cereus" as part of the name, the genus in particular? If yes, then it counts as columnar. *Cereus* was the genus for all columnar cacti at one point. It has since been broken up into multiple different genera, but many of them retain "cereus" in their names. To be clear, all "cereus" count as columnar, but plenty of non-cereus are also columnar (like Saguaro, *Carnegiea gigantea*). So size and shape is still very important.







Carnegiea gigantea (Saguaro)

Stenocereus eruca

Cleistocactus strausii

So what can we say about them? As a rule, they tend to grow faster than globular cacti. They also are more tolerant of full sun, as the nature of their growth means they don't stay shaded by shrubs and grasses, unlike their more diminutive counterparts. Larger species will eventually need to be put in the ground. Smaller types (like many *Mammillaria*) make wonderful specimen plants in pots for years on end. Some of the taller types may require some staking in windy climates to avoid the risk of snapping in a windstorm. When choosing a place to plant them it is important to know if the cactus stays fairly upright and unbranched or if it sends out multiple stems and branches turning into a giant shrub of sorts. Knowledge of growth rate is also key, as many species can reach 15 feet in a few years, while a Saguaro may take your entire lifetime to reach that height! With such variation between species it is paramount that you look up the specific requirements of the plants you choose.



Espostoa melanostele



Astrophytum ornatum (globular)



Astrophytum ornatum (columnar)

	Plant of the Mon	th 2024
	Cactus	Succulent
January	Echinocactus/Ferocactus	Gasteria
February	Columnar Cacti	Aloe
March	Astrophytum	Tylecodon
April	Gymnocalycium	Mesembs
May	Copiapoa	Adenia
June	Eriosyce	Pachypodium
July	Parodia	Senecio
August	Mammillaria	Euphorbia
September	Variegates	Variegates
October	Echinopsis	Sansevieria
November	Crested/Monstrose	Crested/Monstrose

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 to introduce the membership to the various cactus and succulent genera and to open up a discussion of the culture, care and display of these plants. We encourage members to share their plants with the other members of CCSS.

POM Submissions

Members may submit up to (3) three plants in each of the two categories (Cactus and Succulent). 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 Division may be newly acquired plants.

POM Divisions

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 encourage 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.

CCSS PLANT OF THE MONTH (POM) January, 2024

Cactus - Ferocactus - Echinocactus

Novice:

2nd Ferocactus peninsulae Jonathon Zhu 3rd Ferocactus sp. Ann Powers

Intermediate:

1st Ferocactus wislizeni Susan Krevitt 2nd Echinocactus grusonii Cheryl Norris 3rd Ferocactus cylindraceus Cheryl Norris

var. tortulispinus

Advanced:

1st Ferocactus glaucescens Linda Holub 2nd Ferocactus pilosus Linda Holub

syn. Ferocactus stainesii

3rd Ferocactus glaucescens Linda Holub

Succulents - Gasteria

Novice:

1st Gasteria bicolor var. liliputana Monette Stevens 2nd Gasteria sp. Ann Powers 3rd Gasteria sp. Marsha Bunch

Intermediate:

1st Gasteria bicolor Cheryl Norris
2nd Gasteria 'Little Warty' Susan Krevitt
3rd Gasteria batesiana 'Variegata' Susan Krevitt
HM Gasteria bicolor Cheryl Norris

Advanced:

1st Gasteria x 'Green Lizard' John Martinez
2nd Gasteria excelsa Bryan Chan
3rd Gasteria bicolor var. liliputana Ann Hopkinson



NOTE:

Ann Powers had a Novice 3rd Place winner, Haworthia retusa, in December. Her win and photo were missing from the January newsletter. A beautiful Haworthia worthy of an award. Thank you Ann for pointing out this oversight.

A good showing for the January POM display. There were 9 Novice, 17 Intermediate, and 12 Advance entries for a total of 38 plants. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all that participated.

POM is one of the educational segments of our club meetings. The POM mini show allows the membership to become better acquainted with the different succulent plant genera and how to effectively care for and

Novice, Intermediate, Advanced January Succulents - Gasteria

















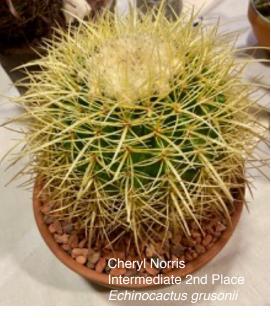




Novice, Intermediate, Advanced January Cactus - Ferocactus Echinocactus

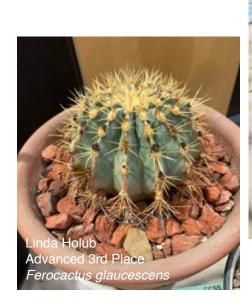












Ferocactus cylindraceus var. tortulispinus

Intermediate 3rd Place







CSSA Affiliate Letter

CSSA Elections

As a result of the recent CSSA election the three vacant Director's positions have been filled.

- Jackson Burkholder (2nd term)
- Kelly Griffin (2nd term)
- Jeff Moore

One emergency appointment for a recently vacated Director's position filled.

Von Watkins

CSSA Business Manager:

Gunnar Eisel, after 14 years as the CSSA Executive Director has stepped down from his position. Gunnar's contribution to the CSSA has been exceptional and he will be missed. As a result, the Executive Director's position has been changed to a "Business Manager" position. The Executive Board has hired Julie Taber to fill this position. We are all looking forwarded to working with her.

To The Point Newsletter

For the past several years, CSSA has provided its *To The Point* newsletter to Affiliates to pass on to their members at no charge. This was done to introduce the new publication, to call attention to the CSSA webinars, and to increase visibility for CSSA.

At this time, our policy is changing. *To The Point* will be sent to CSSA members only, who can obtain it by logging in to their member portal. We hope that Affiliates will continue to enjoy the newsletter, and to promote it by encouraging their members to join CSSA.

CSSA Web Site:

As you may have noticed, the CSSA website is undergoing major modifications. Please check in often as the program continues to develop.

Updated CSSA Organization Rosters:

Over the past few months many clubs have held elections to determine the leadership of their organizations. Quite often this updated information is not passed on to the CSSA. As a reminder, any changes to your club's board members or schedule of activities can be updated through the CSSA web site. If it is more convenient, you can pass the information on to me and I can update it for you.

Note: Affiliate societies are strongly encouraged to create a society email for point of CSSA contact. Currently, most societies are using a member's personal email as a point of contact. When that member is no longer active in the club and the contact is not update in the CSSA database the CSSA loses its ability to communicate with that society. This has been a significant problem in the past.

Changes in information regarding club meetings, shows, sales and other activities you want posted on the calendar of events can be passed on to Laurel Woodly at laurelwood68@yahoo.com

Annual Affiliate Dues:

An audit of affiliate club dues payments has indicated that some clubs are behind in submitting their annual affiliate dues. Please review your organization's records to determine if your club is up to date. If your organization is no longer active, a short note indicating so would be greatly appreciated. For those of you that are up to date, thank you very much for your participation.

Be safe and take care, John Martinez, Co-Chair CSSA Affiliate Committee

Ceraria namaquensis (Portulacaria namaquensis)

Namaqualand is an arid region of Namibia and South Africa.

Family: Didiereaceae Genus: Ceraria



Native populations currently not endangered. Widespread and common woody desert shrub. Grows in arid winter rainfall areas. In native habitat the leaves will shed in summer. Leaves are tiny, .16" to .30" long and .08" wide. Leaves a sessile meaning they are attached directly to the stem. Mature plants have peeling bark. Small pink flowers appear in spring

just before winter dormancy.







My photo records show that I have had this plant since 2012 but my memory says longer. When I look at it now,I am amazed at its size. In their native habitat they grow to a size of 4-6'. Nice fresh leaves look good in the winter but tend to drop off easily in the summer, although in the greenhouse it never goes completely dormant. Important to keep warm in winter. Doing research I am notified that cutting propagation is difficult, but I keep trying. Recommended propagation is from seed or grafted onto *Portulacaria afra*.

My Ceraria was chosen as Best Novice at the 2019 Inter-City Show.

Ann Hopkinson



CREATING AN ETHICAL CACTUS AND



SUCCULENT COLLECTION

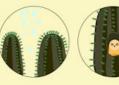


Cactus and succulent species are at risk

Cacti and succulents are central in dry ecosystems



One third of all cactus species (Cactaceae) are at risk of extinction1, and so are many succulents and caudiciforms, including Dudleya, Dioscorea, and Pachypodium². Half of threatened cacti are at-risk at least in part due to the horticultural trade¹. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram influence the desire to take old and rare cacti, succulents and their seeds from habitat3, 4,







Cacti and succulents store water in their tissues, provide nesting areas and food for wildlife, photosynthesize, store carbon, and even provide a place for insects to lay their eggs until they develop into adults. These plants play an essential role in dryland ecosystems and must be protected.

Building your collection



Use caution when buying online.



Was it nursery grown, or habitat collected?



Is it a species



approved grower



Ask your cactus and succulent community.



Ask previous



Plant from seed.



Propagate from a cutting or leaf.



Buy and grow young plants from sellers.



Learn more about plant poaching.



Join a cactus club or online community.



Join a conservation

Plants to be cautious of when purchasing

Slow-growing, rare plants sold online are more likely to be field-collected because their size and habitat characteristics are hard to replicate in a nursery, therefore the time it takes to grow them ethically reduces practical and economic feasibility. If you're looking for rare plants for your collection, ask experts in your plant community for help finding ethical sources, or learn which plants are endangered and/or protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (cites.org). Examples include:



Aztekium



Pachypodium



Identifying field-collected vs. greenhouse-grown

Wild plants tend to face harsher growing conditions than greenhouse-grown plants leading to features which can help you identify the source. These characteristics are not always diagnostic, so when in doubt ask a community expert.

Copiapoa cinerea subsp. columna-alba





Greenhouse-grown

Poaching impacts on wild populations



Wild populations can be significantly reduced by poaching. For example, in 2015, 3500 Ariocarpus fissuratus were stolen, likely from Big Bend National Parks.

Large-scale harvest of slow-growing wild cacti can decimate habitat populations by removing the mature, reproductive plants. This demonstrates how wild and illegal field collection for the horticultural trade is a significant threat to the survival of cacti and succulents in habitat.

This map highlights regions with high levels of cacti and succulents at-risk including Mexico, Chile, and southern Africa which face poaching impacts1.





Copiapoa cinerea which are ~30 cm/12 in. tall and take ~100 years to reach this size in habitat. When they are removed from the wild, all that is left are holes in the ground.

Find out more at: www.ethicalcactus.com