

CENTRAL COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

# ON THE DRY SIDE

440+ FB MEMBERS!  
CLUB UPDATES & MEMBER PHOTOS

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JANUARY 2016

## EXPLORING ECUADOR VISIONS OF ECUADORIAN FLORA AND FAUNA

Presented by Gregg DeChirico.

Traveling West to East, from pacific lowlands of Guayaquil across the Andes to Amazonian highlands of Zamora, then South to North from dry hills of Vilcabamba to the wet forests surrounding Quito, we criss-cross the country in search of bromeliads, orchids and other botanical treasures, with some interesting "close-encounters" of the avian kind.

With 16 vegetative ecozones, from mangrove marsh to montane cloud forest, and savanna to lowland Amazon basin; Ecuador is a nature photographer's paradise!

This presentation is a compilation of photos taken on two separate excursions across Ecuador, one made in June 2011, and again in January, 2012; both organized by Guillermo Rivera and SouthAmericaNatureTours.com.

### GREGG DECHIRICO BIO

Gregg DeChirico has grown plants of all types for over 30 years. He has a nursery, Gregg'sGreenhouse, located in the Santa Barbara area, specializing in seed-grown, rare and exotic plants. Gregg is a frequent participant and vendor at many local and regional club shows and sales. He has travelled throughout Latin America to photograph the local flora and fauna, featured in many of the programs he offers. Gregg served as president of both the San Francisco Succulent & Cactus Society and the Santa Barbara Cactus & Succulent Society, and is the past President of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America (CSSA).



**OUR NEXT MEETING SUNDAY JANUARY 10, 2PM**

**THE ODDFELLOWS HALL 520 DANA ST. (OFF NIPOMO ST.) *mark your calendar!***

# CCCSS: LAST MEETING RECAP

on Sunday, December 13, 2015, members, family and friends gathered together at 2:00 pm and thoroughly enjoyed an abundant and delicious potluck meal, followed by a live auction of show-quality plants and member creations, emceed by Charles Varni and assisted by Rob Skillin and Wayne Mills. There was much interest and participation in the silent auction and all items in that auction were 100 percent contributions to the club.

Sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to and enjoyed our annual feast. We noticed and thought of the members who were unable to attend and look forward to full houses at our meetings and events this coming year.

The Board of Directors did not meet.

May 2016 be the best ever!

Carol Harlow Moss

I hope a Happy Holiday was had by all. I know we enjoyed our Holiday potluck. I have several serving platters left over from the potluck, which will be available in the kitchen at the January meeting.

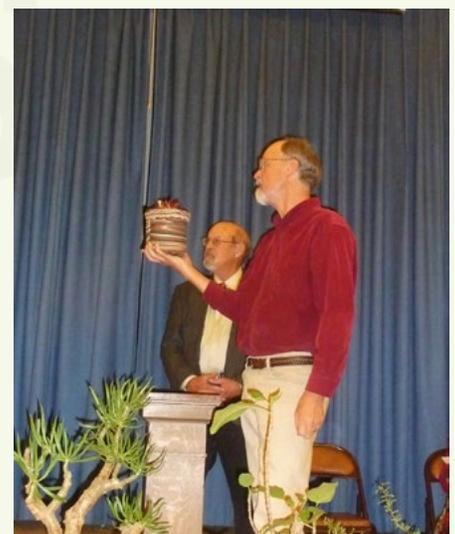
Thank You All for your participation & help.

Pat Gilson

Hospitality Chair

## A BIG THANK YOU!

To Pat Gilson for organizing the pot luck and also to Claudette Rettig who is our "behind the scenes" hospitality person who works her tush off setting up and cleaning up the refreshments every month.



# PLANT OF THE MONTH

## Obregonia, Echinomastus, & Strombocactus by Kyle Williams

This month we have a grab bag of three small, unrelated, genera of cacti, *Obregonia*, *Echinomastus*, and *Strombocactus*. All combined these three genera have only approximately 11 species between them. They are native to Mexico for the most part, though some *Echinomastus* reach the southwestern United States. All stay small enough to make nice potted specimens.

*Echinomastus* has about six to nine species in northern Mexico and the United States, particularly in Arizona, Texas, and adjacent parts of Mexico. Most species are covered in dense spines. Interestingly, the various species could easily be mistaken for other genera at first glance. *E. johnsonii* resembles *Ferocactus*, *E. mariposensis* looks like a *Mammillaria*, while *E. erectocentrus* could be mistaken for an *Echinocereus*. The reality is that *Echinomastus* is most closely related to *Sclerocactus*. In cultivation they take typical cactus care, and most are reasonably to very cold tolerant.

*Obregonia* is a monotypic genus (i.e. a genus with only one species) containing the species *Obregonia denegrii* from a small region of Tamaulipas, Mexico. This plant gets its name from a fairly shameless attempt to impress both the President of Mexico, Mr. Obregon and the Agriculture Minister of Mexico, Mr. Denegri, at the time the plant was discovered. If you are going to have a cactus named after you this is one of the better ones as *Obregonia* is one of the most unusual and coveted cacti in cultivation. The common name "Artichoke Cactus" belies this. The plant forms unusual leaf like tubercles that really do resemble an artichoke, though this is much slower growing and you wouldn't want to eat it! For a long time this species was quite rare and expensive in cultivation. In recent years the price has come down quite a bit as more and more plants are produced. While certainly not common, you can find it fairly readily at cactus shows and through specialist cactus nurseries. Plants are slow growing but cultivation isn't particularly difficult. Plants grown in shady conditions are usually green, but give them more light and they will become a beautiful bronze color. Because they are slow growing and tuberous rooted they can be prone to rot, especially in the winter, if kept too moist. Treat it like an Ariocarpus and you will be fine.

*Strombocactus*, like *Obregonia*, is monotypic. The two genera are somewhat similar in appearance and at one time were thought to be closely related, though DNA research has proven this untrue. The sole species of the genus is *S. disciformis*. Its native habitat is on limestone cliffs in central Mexico. This harsh, very dry, natural habitat is strikingly similar to that of *Aztekium* (albeit around 300 miles apart), and botanists at one time thought they belonged together in the same genus. Cultivation is similar to *Obregonia*.

–Kyle Williams

Reprinted from the Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Cactus Chronicle August 2014



*Obregonia denegrii*



*Obregonia denegrii*



*Strombocactus disciformis*



*Strombocactus disciformis*



*Echinomastus erectocentrus*



*Strombocactus disciformis*

# CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

## NEEDED: LIBRARIAN

Our amazing CCCSS Librarian, Gene Schroeder, needs some assistance over the next several months. The CCCSS would like to request a volunteer to store several plastic storage boxes of our club's library books in your personal garage or some waterproof location for the next 6 months or so. The volunteer would need to transport two boxes of books to each monthly meeting. A small dolly would be provided to assist with transporting the boxes. We're looking for someone with some strength to lift boxes into and out of their car and onto and off of the library table. The job of manning the library table during the club meeting has been assumed by another volunteer. We would greatly appreciate a volunteer stepping up to help with this job for the next several months. This is not a job that requires a lot of re-planning, public-speaking, research, knowledge of rare and unusual cactus and succulents, or meeting and greeting dozens of club members. All we need is someone dedicated to this club, who is willing to take on this small task of bringing 2 boxes of books to the meetings for about 6 months. Your assistance would be greatly appreciated! Thank you in advance for your help! Please contact Kathie Matsuyama at 929-4692 if you can help.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**January 10** CCCSS  
January Meeting. 2pm!

**January 16** Desert Forum  
at the Huntington Gardens  
- 9-4:30. More details (626)  
405-2100.

## POLICY FOR ADS

This is your club! We would like you to have the ability to share your club-related items so your Board of Directors implemented this policy.

"6.1 Individual club members may be allowed to place an announcement in the eNewsletter for plant-related/club-related items that might be of interest to the members. There will be no charge for the announcement and it should be limited to 30 words, and can include an optional small picture, and contact information; it can run for one month with an extension upon a re-submission of the ad material. The proposed ad must be emailed to the Newsletter Editor 2 weeks prior to the next CCCSS Monthly Membership Meeting meeting. It might not appear in the print version due to space limitations."

## TAKE IN SOME NATURE AND ENJOY OUR HOBBY

[Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino, CA](#)

[Anza-Borrego Desert State Park](#)

[Death Valley National Park](#)

[Joshua Tree National Park](#)

[Mojave National Preserve](#)

[The Living Desert Wildlife & Botanical Park, Palm Springs, CA](#)

[The Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia, CA](#)

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(All submissions to the CCCSS newsletter must be submitted two weeks prior to the monthly meeting.)