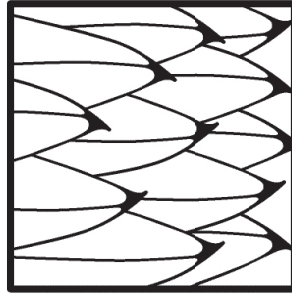


Central Coast Cactus  
& Succulent Society  
c/o Markus Mumper  
780 Merced St.  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449



# On the Dry Side

February, 2012

## CCCSS January Meeting Recap

At a time of year when our plants might not be looking their show-quality best, a lot of people showed up for our first meeting of the year to find out if those withered-looking succulents are just resting or if maybe a tiny drink would do them some good. We were given the word, loud and clear: put down that hose and step away from the bib!

**Gene Schroeder** welcomed our guests and made it official: our holiday party last month was the best ever. If you were there, you already knew that.

**The California Garden Club** (Montaño de Oro District) will hold its winter meeting February 6 – 9, 2012, at The Cliffs in Shell Beach. Contact Gene or **Linda Hunt** for details.

People inquired about paying dues for 2012. Gene explained that when we joined the national group, our fiscal year changed from a January/December fiscal year to one that begins on July 1 and runs through June 30. Last year's paid memberships were extended to cover the period January 1 through June 30, 2012.

**Rob Skillin** mentioned that a planning committee is being formed for our show and sale over Memorial Day weekend. No experience is necessary, and the "old-hands" will gladly mentor newbies. If you want to volunteer but missed the sign-up sheet, contact Rob or another board member. Good News: this year we will be able to get set up and ready for the plants starting at 2:00 PM on Friday, May 25, and the center should be ready to accept plants at 5:00 PM.

**Dr. Charles Spotts** talked about the plant of the month, *Schlumbergera* and the similar *Rhipsalidopsis*, both of which are casually known as Holiday Cacti because they bloom around Thanksgiving/ Christmas (the *Schlumbergera*) or Easter. Charles' article in last month's newsletter presents a much better description than I could summarize here, so please take a look at the December newsletter for lots of information.

**Mary Peracca** introduced the January speaker, our very own **Donna Duerk**, who fell in love with the genus *Gasteria* and has ended up an expert with a large collection. Donna shared her plants with us by way of photographs of her nearly complete collection of all previously identified sixteen species. She met, and came close to traveling to South Africa with, **Ernest van Jaarsveld**, who wrote THE book on *Gasteria* in 1994. He has revised (but not yet published) it to include newly discovered species – many discovered by him – which bring the total to twenty-three known species and more for Donna to collect. It was inspiring to see what any one of us might be able to accomplish with an interest and a goal. Thank you, Donna, for sharing your little gems and your knowledge with us.

~ Submitted by Carol Moss

The **CGCI Winter Board Meeting** was hosted by the Montana de Oro District (the one we belong to) at the Cliffs Resturant on February 6-9th.

All district member clubs were asked to donate two "gift baskets" to be raffled during the event with all proceeds going to the district organization.

I thought this a great opportunity to showcase our members and their talents to a state-wide audience and the Execvutive Board agreed.

We decided to purchase materials and produce arangements that would truly represent our group. This task was given to two teams:

Charles Varni paired with Pat Gilson; and Richard Rowe paired with Nick Wilkinson. The attached images show the amazing results.

I can't wait to hear the coments and, bids from the Winter Board meeting attendees. I expect that they will be very impressed with the skills and talent found in our group and as proud of the results as I am.

Cheers ... And Great Job!!

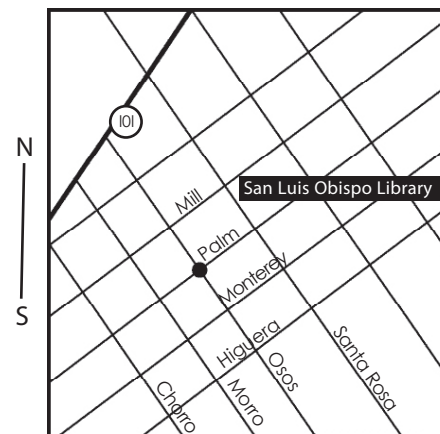
Gene Schroeder



Richard & Nick's creation.

Charles & Pat's "gift basket".

## NEXT meeting:



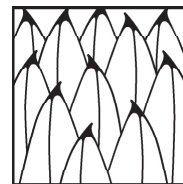
Sun, Feb. 12'th at  
2:00 pm

San Luis Obispo  
Public Library

995 Palm Street  
San Luis Obispo



Here's an unusual *Crassula* -  
*C. umbella*



Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society

e-mail: [markusmumper@gmail.com](mailto:markusmumper@gmail.com)

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

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Gene Schroeder 929-2161	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> Nick Wilkinson 528-8880	<b>SECRETARY</b> Carol Moss 438-4906	<b>CSSA AFFILIATE</b> Rob Skillin 473-0788	<b>TREASURER</b> Edie Price 489-8491
<b>EDITOR</b> Markus Mumper 773-1499	<b>ASST. EDITOR</b> Nick Wilkinson 528-8880	<b>PUBLICITY</b> Wayne Mills 481-3495	<b>LIBRARIANS</b> Jan Moon 927-1310 Maggie Wagner 773-1499	<b>HOSPITALITY</b> Pat Gilson 481-5596 Ann Byrne 934-0492

A one time free newsletter will be mailed out to those who sign in at the monthly meetings.  
After this dues must be paid in order to start a subscription.

# Speaker of the Month \_\_\_\_\_

## Mark Muradian

### Peru, Land of the Inca, Land of Cacti

This program, titled 'Peru, land of the Inca, Land of Cacti' was taken in September of 2010. Starting in Chiclayo, and ending in Cuzco, he travelled by bus to many habitats, sometimes on roads no bus should ever attempt to drive!

The program is a video presentation, with all the sounds and motion to help the viewer feel as if they are there. With the optional fly over of the Nazca lines and the mandatory visit to Machu Picchu, it was an exciting trip to be on.

Mark has been in the cactus hobby close to 30 years and has been making pottery for some 17 years. He is a third-generation family farmer in the central valley, farming the same acreage since 1915.

**Mark will be bringing pottery to sell at the meeting!**

License 557155-C-27 John Goetz  
805.459.3132

**SAN SIMEON NURSERY  
LANDSCAPES**

Specializing in low maintenance, drought resistant California landscapes.

P. O. Box 7149 Los Osos, CA 93412 email: jgoetz@charter.net

**You Must See These DVDs!**  
Enter CCCSS For 10% Off +Free Shipping

Success With **SUCCULENTS**

THOSE **CAPTIVATING Cacti**

Buy At [CaptivatingCacti.com](http://CaptivatingCacti.com)

**CLAYWORKS  
POTTERY**

Richard Rowe  
805.235.9721  
roweclayworks@att.net

[www.galleryatthenetwork.com](http://www.galleryatthenetwork.com)

**grown**  
the nursery at moonstone gardens

15% off for all CCCSS members

7432 Exotic Gardens Road | Cambria | CA | 93430  
PH 805-924-1340 [www.grownursery.com](http://www.grownursery.com)

**PLANTERA PRIMAL**  
SOLAR ELECTRIC FIRED STONEWARE CERAMICS

**CHARLES VARNI**  
OCEANO, CALIFORNIA  
805.459.6698  
[WWW.VARNI.ORG](http://WWW.VARNI.ORG)  
CHARLES@VARNI.ORG

**FARM SUPPLY**  
A COMPANY

*We Have Four Locations To Serve You*

224 Tank Farm Road San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 805.543.3751 • FAX 805.543.0613	1108 Paso Robles Street Paso Robles, CA 93446 805.238.1177 • FAX 805.238.3527
1079 El Camino Real Arroyo Grande, CA 93420 805.489.5514 • FAX 805.473.7263	1920 N. Broadway Santa Maria, CA 93454 805.922.2737 • FAX 805.922.6982

# Upcoming Events \_\_\_\_\_

## February 11

### San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale

Casa del Prado  
1549 El Prado, San Diego CA

## March 2 - 4

### Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale

Fresno County Fairgrounds  
1121 S. Chance Ave, Fresno CA

## March 17 - 18

### Midwest Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Show & Sale

Cleveland Botanical Garden  
11030 East Blvd., Cleveland OH

## March 23 - 24

### Orange County Cactus & Succulent Show & Sale

First Anaheim Methodist Church  
1000 S. State College Blvd., Anaheim CA

## March 30 - April 2

### Cactus & Succulent Soc. of Australia and the Ballarat Cactus & Succulent Soc.

Hoppers Crossing, Victoria, Australia  
[www.cssaustralia.org.au](http://www.cssaustralia.org.au)

## March 31 - April 1

### Cactus & Succulent Society of San Jose 43rd Annual Show & Sale

Marian A. Peterson Middle School  
1380 Rosalia Ave., Sunnyvale CA

# Hospitality News \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks to all for the set up and clean up, and of course all of the great food, at the CCCSS Christmas pot-luck. It looked like everyone had a great time and left with a full belly.

## Compact South African Miniature Crassulas - Cushions and Stacks

The genus *Crassula* contains about 200 species of world wide distribution, ranging from minute annuals to large trees; from marsh and aquatic plants to warm desert survivors. Nearly all of the more than 80 compact species occur in the warm dry areas of South Africa, mostly in the winter rainfall areas. They are generally treated as winter growers, easy to grow given ample sun and air, but need frost protection in cold winter areas. An extensive coverage of the genus can be found in *Crassula, a Growers Guide*, by Gordon Rowley, from which this commentary was adapted.

This note considers only a few of the more desirable and readily obtainable miniature compact species from South Africa. In my personal organization, a compact species is one in which stems are absent or inconspicuous and completely hidden by the fleshy leaves. They may have the form of a compact cluster in which the stems are not apparent at all and which appear as a cluster of closely packed globular or succulent leaves, or a form in which the stems may be quite elongated and branched, but are covered by fleshy leaves which completely hide the stem itself. I have used the term 'cushion' to describe the first form, and 'stacked' to describe the latter (stacked forms – a term adopted from Daves Garden).

The placement of a species into one of these groups is my own arbitrary decision, and there are many species which are intermediate and whose placement is arbitrary. All of the forms described here are amenable to porch culture in pots or sometimes in hanging pots. The cushion forms often seem to have no stems at all and appear to be just clusters of highly fleshy leaves, or of rosettes arising directly from the substrate, or sometimes of very short highly branched stems covered with fleshy leaves.

A few of my own favorite species include *alstonii*, *ausensis*, *barbata*, *elegans*, *hemispherica*, *hirtipes*, *mesembryanthemopsis*, *socialis*, *susannae*, *tecta*, *tomentosa*, and the various cultivars of *susannae*. Several forms appear as intermediates between highly compact and stacked in that they have more or less spherical or oval fleshy leaves which are closely clustered on elongated stems. These include *Crassula barklyi* (*feres*), *columella*, *columnaris*, *corallina*, *deceptor*, *exilis* (*picturatis*), *marchandii*, and *plegmatoides*.

In some sense, all *Crassulas* are stacked with leaves surrounding a central stem. But the plants I have grouped as stacked forms are the ones that grow straight up and not the mounding or rosette varieties. Most of the stacked forms are patterned after *Crassula perforata*, *perfoliata* (*falcata*), *rupestris*, *pyramidalis*, and their hybrids (Ivory Pagoda, Jade Necklace, Morgans Beauty, Buddha's Temple, Moonglow) And there are the short, clumping stacked ones (*Crassula marchandii* and *columella*), and the dinky ones, *muscosa* (*lycopodioides*). And then there are the *Crassula capitella* (*thyr-siflora*) varieties which qualify as stacked plants but which often appear as cushions. There are probably dozens more, but these are some of the most common ones found in cultivation.

*Crassulas* root and grow readily from stem cuttings. A few species are monocarpic (die after blooming) but they can be propagated by beheading the plant before it flowers. Most of the species reach maturity in a few years, then decline, so it is best to rejuvenate the collection by starting new plants from cuttings before the originals have reached the end of their life span. They can be grown in ordinary cactus culture mixture and fertilized during watering in the growing season (late fall, early spring) with dilute balanced soluble fertilizer. Rowley suggests some light watering during the dormant period (no fertilizer) to keep the roots from becoming totally desiccated.

It is better to grow the plants in a deeper pot rather than a shallow bowl, according to Rowley. The *Crassula* inflorescence is a cyme, a single stalk (peduncle) terminating in a highly branched umbrella or dome, or ball, bearing a large number of single flowers. The flowers themselves are very small, simple starlike flowers, but the cyme presents a major attractive display to pollinators. The flowers may be white, pink, red, and occasionally yellow *Crassulas* are subject to attack by mealy bugs and aphids. The bugs retreat into the crevices and spaces between the leaves and inflorescences of the compact species so it is best to inspect the plants often and remove any dead flower remains and leaves frequently. Rowley treats his plants with an annual soaking of systemic pesticide/insecticide in the spring when growth is beginning and reports no unfavorable side effects. I have found it effective to treat infestations with 70% isopropanol if done early in the infestation.

~Charles Spotts



*Crassula* 'Buddha's Temple'