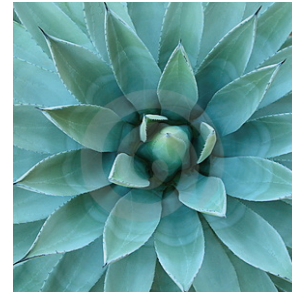
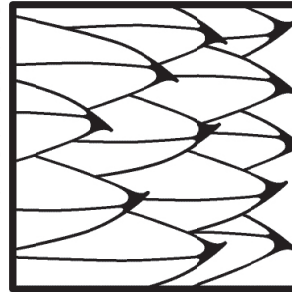


Central Coast Cactus  
& Succulent Society  
c/o Markus Mumper  
780 Merced St.  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449



# On the Dry Side

May 2010

## Inside this issue: CCCSS April Meeting Recap

- Upcoming Speaker  
- Nick Wilkinson
- Genus of the Month  
- Agave
- Last Month's  
- Meeting Minutes

We had a huge turnout for our April meeting. Rain nor wind stopped over 150 people from showing up with standing room only.

Thanks to Wayne Mills for organizing the field trip on April 10th to Anne Erb and Muranaka Bonsai. The word is that it was great fun.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER: Please pay your dues and please return any library books you may have.**

You have a little over a month to get your plants ready for our Memorial Day weekend show & sale. We still can use help volunteering, and if you sign up to help you will get a discount on a future trip to the Inter City Show & Sale in August. This will be a bus trip to Los Angeles and one of the largest Cactus & Succulent shows in the world.

Our plant of the month was an all time favorite of many, *Aloe*. These "Hummingbird Flower" plants are mainly from Africa and in the *Liliaceae* family. Many are in bloom right now and have striking flowers, usually red or orange but occasionally yellow and white. They can grow in temperatures down to the 30's, but if it gets into the 20's bring them inside or protect them, that's too cold for them! Growers have been hybridizing them so you can find them in smaller than natural sizes with some very unusual and beautiful foliage.

We had the pleasure of having Debra Lee Baldwin as our guest speaker, an award winning photo journalist from the San Diego area. Her presentation included a wonderful slide show of some beautiful gardens and some from her own garden. Debra promotes that one doesn't have to have flowers in a garden when a succulent's colorful foliage is just as beautiful. The low maintenance and low water requirements are also a huge plus. Debra's vision of designing with succulents is contrast and repetition. Take your plants and pots, combine colors, textures and rocks to create a beautiful patio or garden scene. Even if you live in frosty zones pots can always be moved to a protected area, so don't let it stop you from growing succulents if you live 'over the hill'. Thank you Debra, I know I came home and looked at my plants with a whole different vision.

See you at the May meeting.

~Jan Moon

## Speakers of the Month

Nick Wilkinson & Rob Skillin

## PREPARING YOUR SHOW PLANTS

This month Nick and Rob will lead a demonstration on preparing show plants. They will bring some of their own plants, pots, soil and top dressings to provide a lesson on their thoughts on show plant preparation and presentation.

They invite you to bring your own plants, pots, etc. to participate in the demonstration. Don't be shy!

## CCCSS Show Best Of Categories

Open Class - Best Cactus	
Open Class - Best Succulent	
Advanced Class - Best Cactus	
Advanced Class - Best Succulent	
Novice Class - Best Cactus	
Novice Class - Best Succulent	
Outstanding Novice Euphorbia	Rick and Karen James
Outstanding Advanced Euphorbia	Farm Supply
Outstanding Open Euphorbia	Farm Supply
Best Baja Native Entry	Grow Nursery
Best Caudiciform Entry	CCCSS
Best Collection	CCCSS
Best Rookie Entry	Rob Skillin
Best Staged Entry	Grow Nursery
Bested Crested Entry	Farm Supply
Outstanding Epiphyte	Rhonda Grace
Outstanding Gymnocalycium	Bud & Ev's C&S
Outstanding Mammillaria	Farm Supply
Outstanding Agavaceae	Grow Nursery
Outstanding Echeveria	Wayne Mills
Outstanding Haworthia	Farm Supply
Outstanding Sansevieria	Lee Eby
Outstanding Dish Garden	Rick and Karen James

## Top Dressing

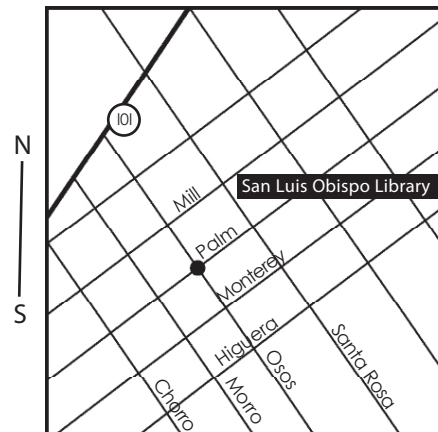
Our annual Show & Sale is quickly approaching (May 29th & 30th). In an effort to help our club members get their plants looking their best we are going to have top dressings available at the April and May meetings. There will be several different types to choose from – red lava, black lava, crushed granite, crushed brick, beige rock and green rock. All will be packaged in quart bags. For current members the first bag is free (one time only!!!), each additional bag is \$1.00. For non-members each bag is \$2.00.

## NEXT meeting:

Sun, May 9'th at  
2:00 pm

San Luis Obispo  
Public Library

995 Palm Street  
San Luis Obispo

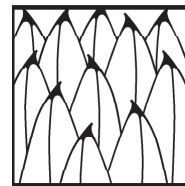


### NEWS FROM THE MARCH BOARD MEETING:

- Still waiting for everyone to get caught up on annual dues
- Show & Sale May 29th & 30th, still need volunteers
- Please spread the word and put show flyers up in your town
- We will be awarding 10 more "Best Of" ribbons this year
- We just had business cards made for our club. We will be distributing these at our show & sale
- If you would like to receive your newsletter by e-mail instead of regular mail, please let us know at the front desk - printing and mailing newsletters costs us about \$1.00 per month each!

### BOARD—MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be held on May 9'th right after our General Meeting. As always all members are welcome.



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> Jan Moon 927-1310	<b>CCSSA 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> Martin Howell & Jeanne Hanyasz 544-5389	<b>HOSPITALITY</b> Pat Gilson 481-5596 Maggie Wagner 773-1499

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.

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

**Buy At CaptivatingCacti.com**

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Richard Rowe  
 potter / artist

7432 Exotic Garden Rd.  
 Cambria, CA 93428  
 P 805 924 1340

[roweclayworks@att.net](mailto:roweclayworks@att.net)

**The  
 Clayworks**



Ben Trogdon ©

**EL CHOYERO  
 SPEAKS:**

**Question:** El Choyero, I buy a new plant from a grower and it looks great, but, after a year or two it stops growing and does not look so hot anymore. What gives?

**Answer:** Hola Amigos and Amigas!  
 There are many obvious reasons why this happens - inappropriate soil, watering, lighting and temperatures, and/or pests and diseases.

But there is one more growing condition that must be considered - irrigation water pH.

pH is a measure of acidity or basicity and ranges from 0 (acidic) to 14 (basic). Pure water is neutral with a pH of 7, but the water that comes out of our hoses is never pure!

Rain is slightly acidic because CO<sup>2</sup> from the air has dissolved and becomes part of the rain drop solution - plants love it. Most irrigation water, though, is ground water and has picked up (dissolved) various salts that occur in soil and rock. This makes ground water generally basic.

Plants require nutrients (ions) from the soil to survive. Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium are the three biggies along with various micro-nutrients. If these ions cannot be absorbed through the roots or the skin the plant is literally (well, in a sense) starving. For these ions to stay in solution in adequate amounts the water should be on the acidic side - a pH of around 5.5 to 6 is good for plant nutrient uptake.

To lower the pH of your water try adding some vinegar prior to irrigating. Start with about one part household vinegar to seventy five parts water. You can use litmus paper to measure the actual pH.

It may take up to a year to notice the improvements in your plants but I guaranty they will come!

Adios!

**Upcoming Events**

**May 15**

**Gates Cactus & Succulent Society**

Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center - 9:00am to 4:00pm  
 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Avon (909) 360-8802

**May 15 - 16**

**Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale**

Los Angeles County Arboretum - 9:00am to 4:00pm  
 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia (310) 670-8148

**May 16**

**Huntington Botanical Gardens Plant Sale**

Huntington Botanical Gardens - 10:00am to 5:00pm  
 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino (626) 405-2160

**May 16**

**Santa Barbara Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

MacKenzie Park - 10:00am to 3:00pm  
 Las Positas Road and MCCaw Avenue, Santa Barbara

**May 29 - 30**

**Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

Ludwick Center - 10:00am to 5:00pm (29th), 10:00am to 4:00pm (30th)  
 864 Santa Rosa Street, San Luis Obispo (805) 473-0788

**June 5 - 6**

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

Casa del Prado, Room 101 - 10:00am to 5:00pm (5th), 10:00am to 4:00pm (6th)  
 Balboa Park, San Diego (619) 477-4779

**June 12 - 13**

**Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

Sepulveda Garden Center - 9:00am to 5:00pm (12th), 9:00am to 4:00pm (13th)  
 16633 Magnolia Boulevard, Encino (818) 363-3432

**June 12 - 13**

**San Francisco Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

San Francisco County Fair Building  
 9th & Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

**Hospitality News**

Sign up to bring refreshments and get a 4 inch plant!! You must sign the **Hospitality Sign-Up sheet** and bring refreshments to get a plant. We need refreshments for each monthly meeting and we need to know who is bringing them. Thanks to everyone who has been contributing to the refreshment fund; donations can be made at the refreshment table.

~Pat

## Agave L., (*a-GAH-vee*) Greek - illustrious

In the American continent, the monocotyledons have diverged into a number of important families of succulent plants, including the Agavaceae which form distinctive rosettes and flower spikes. The Agavaceae family includes *Agave*, *Beschorneria*, *Furcraea*, *Hesperaloe*, *Manfreda*, *Polianthes*, *Prochnyanthes* and *Yucca*.

The genera *Beaucarnea*, *Calibanus*, *Dasyliirion* and *Nolina* were formerly included in the Agavaceae but are now generally regarded as members of the *Nolinaceae*. The Old World *Draceneae* were also once grouped with the Agavaceae family but are now in a family of their own.

Over 300 species of *Agave* have been described but only about 200 are currently recognized. Most species are monocarpic, although a few can flower several times during their life. The flowers are "perfect" with both male and female parts. Many species of *Agave* are bat pollinated and produce musky perfumes as attractants. Others produce sweeter odors to attract insects.

Most *Agave* consist of rosettes of thick, hard, rigid leaves often with marginal teeth and usually with a lethally sharp terminal spine. Prolific vegetative growth and offsetting at the base of the plant or through stolons usually maintains a clump of plants thus compensating for the loss of flowering rosettes. A few species remain solitary, relying on seed production for survival of the species.

The interior of the leaves contains longitudinal fibres representing the vascular system. *Agave* leaf fibre was used by native Americans. *Agave* fibre from a range of species is of commercial importance, with the best quality fibre coming from the youngest leaves. Sisal (hemp) made from cultivated *Agave sisalana* is used to make clothing and rugs.

Carbohydrates stored in the core of several species of *Agave* (Maguey to the Aztecs) were fermented by native Americans to make a beverage called pulque which was used in religious ceremonies. Distillation of a similar ferment made from the developing *Agave* flower bud is the basis for modern production of Mescal. Only if made from the Blue *Agave* within Tequila, Mexico can the distillate be called Tequila.



Mayahuel - The goddess of *Maguey*

## Our Show and Sale is Just Around the Corner!

I would like to encourage everybody to bring at least one plant to the show. We had a great turnout last year, but I know there are more of you with nice plants to bring. Especially, I would like to see more novices get involved - its fun! There are some special rosettes which are dedicated to the Novice category, including Best Rookie Plant. What is a rookie? Someone who hasn't shown before. Give it a try - you'll like it!

If you can't make it to this month's meeting, but would like to volunteer to help out, give Pat Gilson a call at 481-5596. Volunteers get special pricing on our next field trip!

Plant set-up for the show is Saturday morning, from 8:00 to 10:00. Please, that means you are finished setting up by 10:00, not just showing up at 10:00. The judging will start at 10:00 and runs for only 1 hour, so they don't have time to be delayed by late arrivers.

There will be entry cards at the monthly meeting, and at the show Saturday morning. The show schedule will also be available, and I'll get it posted on our website also.

I hope to see each of you there; call me with questions or suggestions.

Rob Skillin  
Show Chair  
473-0788

### MISSING LIBRARY BOOKS

The following books are missing from our library. Please take a look around your house and see if you might have forgotten to bring one back. Many of these are popular books and other members would like a chance to read them too.

Thanks!

Cacti & Succulents Step by Step Growing Success, by B. Kern  
Cacti and Succulents, by Gunter Anderson  
Cactus & Succulents, by Sunset Magazine  
Epi Flora Vol 1&2  
Epiphyllum Basics How to Grow Epiphyllums for Beginners, by Sean Minogue  
Pachycaul and Caudiciforms, A Guide to Growing, by P. de Vosjoli  
Stuck on Cactus; A Beginners Guide, by David E. Wright  
The Complete Book of Cacti and Succulents, by T. Hewitt  
The Encyclopedia of Cacti, by Gerhard Groner  
The New Haworthia Handbook, by M.B. Bayer  
The Sansevieria Trifasciata Varieties, by B. Juan Chahinian