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AUGUST 2015

SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

Ernesto Sandoval

“Succulent Propagation at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory”

A brief tour of the techniques used at the Conservatory to propagate a variety of succulent plants from seed (sexually) and from stems, and leaves.



Techniques for good pollination as well as seed germination and grafting will be covered. Pollination and seed germination of *Dorstenia gigas* as well as *Welwitschia mirabilis* will be discussed along with seed capture of *Euphorbias* and grafting of *Aztekium* and other difficult to grow cacti. Leaf cuttings of *Haworthia*, *Gasteria*, and *Sansevieria* will also be covered.

Ernesto will also be bringing plants to sell such as *Dorstenia*, *Albuca* and *Cyrtanthus spiralis*, *Aloe comosa*, *Eulychnia* perhaps, and an assortment of other rare and uncommon succulents for the benefit of your collection and the growing of plants at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory.

Ernesto Sandoval has been wondering and seeking questions to why plants grow and look the way that they do since a young age. Now he explains and interprets the world of plants to a variety of ages and experiences from K-12 to professionals and Master Gardeners. He regularly lectures to a variety of western Garden Clubs throughout the year and particularly to Succulent Clubs throughout the State and elsewhere since that group of plants is his particular passion within his general passion for plants. He describes himself as a “Jose of All Plants, Master of None.” Ernesto thoroughly enjoys helping others, and gardeners in particular, to understand why and how plants do what they do.

When he was about 13 he asked his dad why one tree was pruned a particular way and another tree another way. His dad answered bluntly “because that’s the way you do it.” Since then he’s been learning and teaching himself the answers to those and many other questions by getting a degree at UC Davis in Botany and working from student weeder/waterer to Director over the last 24 years at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory. He’s long left the “mow blow and go” monoculture landscape gardening world and has immersed himself in the world of polyculture and biodiversity by managing and supervising the growing of several thousand types of plants at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory, many of them succulents. Several of his favorite garden projects involved converting lawns and or water loving landscapes to drought tolerant and diversity filled gardens! He likes to promote plant liberation by encouraging gardeners of all sorts to grow more plants in the ground when possible. He loves the technical language of Botany but prefers to relate information in more understandable methods of communication! By helping people to understand the workings of plants he hopes to help us better understand how to and why our plants do what they do and how we can maximize their growth with less effort.

OUR NEXT MEETING: SUNDAY AUGUST 9, 2PM

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

CCCSS JUNE MEETING RECAP

President **Ken Byrne** called to order the general membership meeting of CCCSS on Sunday, July 12, 2015, shortly after 2:00 pm. He announced that the awards from our Show and Sale were available for viewing on the tables in front of the stage. Ken then invited the people who provided snacks to select a thank-you succulent and then the eight first-time visitors introduced themselves and received a plant in thanks. **Terry Skillin** reported on the recent bus trip to The Huntington. Terry said that our S&S was superior to the one at The Huntington, which is touted as one of the best in the country. **Susan "Braids" Waidner** mentioned that because the S&S t-shirts sold out so quickly, she plans to order more if enough people are interested. Contact Braids if you want one at \$10 each. A visitor, **Spring Smith**, announced free cuttings in return for help repotting. (The Brag and Plant-of-the-Month Tables have been relocated to the rear of the meeting hall. Participants are asked to fill out a short information card and they receive a raffle ticket in return. Descriptions of the Brag and POM plants are no longer given during the meeting.) **Rob Skillin** was in South Africa, so Terry Skillin, newly elected Member-at-Large, brought the raffle and thank-you plants and described the raffle plants in terms we could all understand. **Terry Leivers** will do the honors next month and promises even simpler descriptions. Ken then read the names of the S&S winners. Many of our volunteers do things for CCCSS that aren't always obvious. For example, **Gene Schroeder** and his wife **Dail** prepare the winners' certificates, including Gene's photographs of the winning plants. Another volunteer who works hard every single meeting but doesn't get a lot of recognition is **Claudette Rettig**, who oversees the presentation of our snacks at break time. That's what happened next.

Following the break, **Kathie Matsuyama** introduced our speaker, **Tony Krock**, who has been at Terra Sol Nursery for twelve years. Tony gave a presentation of his trip to regions in the Las Vegas area where *Agave Utahensis* – native to Utah – is found growing in limestone. We saw many examples photographed in the region, including Cima Road off Highway 15 (Power Line Road) and Peek-A-Boo Canyon, 90 miles from Las Vegas. A good time to go is January through May ... otherwise heat is a problem. Agaves do well planted in containers with proper drainage. They should go dry between watering, with very little water in winter. They enjoy full sun and bright light, and heat. They are easy to grow from seed. They grow in habitat from 2,000 to 6,000 feet and are cold-hardy. We saw other varieties, most with very interesting spines, some black, some ivory, some curly, some very long, and some bright red ones.

At the conclusion of Tony's presentation, Gene showed a slide show that he made from a series of photographs taken by Ken Byrne during the S&S. The raffles were held and the meeting adjourned.

AT FUTURE MEETINGS, THE EXCHANGE RAFFLE WILL BE DELAYED UNTIL THE CHAIRS AND TABLES HAVE BEEN STORED, SO THAT PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN THE EXCHANGE CAN HELP WITH CLEANUP.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary



PLANT OF THE MONTH FOR AUGUST

Aztekium and Geohintonia by Kyle Williams



Aztekium ritteri



Aztekium ritteri



Geohintonia Mexicana



Aztekium valdezii



Gene Schroeder's Geohintonia Mexicana

This month we focus on two small genera of cacti that are very rare in the wild, quite uncommon in most collections, and hardly anyone has mature specimens of them that are NOT wild dug. Why focus on such an obscure group you may ask? Because sometimes the most obscure plants can make for some of the most interesting subjects.

Aztekium contains three species of small, slow growing cacti that grow in highly inaccessible areas (though not inaccessible enough to stop poaching) of the state of Nuevo Leon in northeastern Mexico. The plants are quite small, averaging 1-4" in diameter depending on the species. They stand out from other small globular cacti in having very unusual and attractive wrinkles covering the plant body. They grow in cracks and pockets of limestone and gypsum cliffs. They are said to prefer growing on north facing slopes, which is common for small cliff dwelling succulents of all types. Small plants eking out a living on the side of a cliff with a tiny area for roots is hard enough. Getting blasted all day by the intense desert sun on a south-facing cliff, in addition to that, is just too much for little plants to bear.

If you were interested in Aztekium just 25 years ago, you would have thought the genus was monotypic containing just *A. ritteri*. So difficult to find are these plants that it wasn't until 1991 that the second species, *A. hintonii*, was found, and it took all the way to 2013 to find and name the newest member of the genus, *A. valdezii*. At first glance it would be difficult to tell the species apart, but paying attention to the size of the plants, the shape and number of ribs, and details of the flowers can help you distinguish them. By contrast, Aztekium is so unique in appearance that it would be nearly impossible to mistake any other cactus for this genus.

Geohintonia mexicana is the sole species in its genus. Like Aztekium, it is a small, slow growing cactus whose habitat is the gypsum hills and cliffs of Nuevo Leon. In fact, in many places it is sympatric (grows in the same location as) *Aztekium hintonii*. Knowing this, it may not surprise you that both *Geohintonia mexicana* and *Aztekium hintonii* were discovered by the same people at the same time and were published as new species together in the same scientific paper. Further scientific research into the evolutionary relationships of the cactus family has shown Aztekium and Geohintonia to be very closely related. Visually there is a something of a resemblance between the genera, though Geohintonia is quite distinct in having many more ribs and no wrinkles. Some have gone so far as to suggest Geohintonia could be a hybrid between *A. hintonii* and *Echinocactus grusonii* (Golden Barrel Cactus) as they occur in the same area and are related. However, it is much more reasonable to assume Geohintonia is an evolutionary distinct species that happens to resemble Aztekium and Echinocactus because it is a close relative, not because of some elaborate hybridization theory.

Cultivation of both genera is nearly identical, and not overly difficult. They are very, very slow growing cacti, so patience is a must. They can be sensitive to overwatering, but if you can grow an *Ariocarpus* you should be able to handle these plants. Plants having their own roots is most people's preference, but grafting will give you a faster growing plant and less worries about watering. Growing from seed will take many, many years before you get a decent sized plant. Finding these plants for sale on grafted or on their own roots is one of the biggest challenges of all. If you see one for sale at a reasonable price grab it quick! Otherwise it will be gone before you know it. *Reprinted from the Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Cactus Chronicle May 2015*

SUCCULENT GARDENS

On September 26 and 27, 2015, **Succulent Gardens** in Castroville, California, is presenting the **2015 Succulent Extravaganza**. This event is ideal for succulent lovers. The website says that *"This year we will continue to explore the topic of succulent use in the landscape. We will dive into new topics via demonstration gardens and talks and classes covering companion planting with succulents, cold tolerances, soil preparation, watering and drip-irrigation calibration for a drought-tolerant landscape, and much more. Plan to go home with many ideas that you can incorporate in your own backyard."*



The event features noted speakers, creative gardens (including hanging ones) and there is food and, yes, even plants for sale. A group of CCCSSers will make the drive up on Saturday, the 26th, meeting at 10:30 am in front of the nursery located at 2133 Elkhorn Road in Castroville. Google Maps estimates the drive to be 155 miles from Arroyo Grande and to take about 2 hours and 40 minutes with traffic.

If you plan to go, please contact Wayne at 805-481-3495, or email at wmmills50@hotmail.com, especially if you are interested in carpooling, either as a driver or a passenger. Please wear your nametag if you have it ... it looks good for the club, and helps us get your name right – after all, there are over 300 of us now!

For more information, including a schedule of activities, see www.sgplants.com/pages/succulent-extravaganza

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 8 & 9

Intercity S&S, LA County Arboretum, 626-798-2430

September 6

Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Plant Auction: 12 - 5, Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Road, Long Beach 90615 Info: (310) 922-6090

September 12

CCCSS Monthly Meeting, 2pm, Odd Fellows Hall

September 26

Santa Barbara County Horticultural Society's Annual Plant Sale: 10 - 4. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church located at La Cumbre Road at Foothill Road in Santa Barbara.

October 24-25

Palomar Show & Sale Saturday 9-5 Sunday 10 - 4 at San Diego Botanic Gardens, 230 Quail Gardens Road, Encinitas Info: hciservices@gmail.com (858) 382-1797

November 7 -8

San Gabriel Valley Winter Show & Sale - Ayres Hall, 301 No. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia Info Tom Glavich (626) 798-2430 Or John Matthews (661) 714-1052, Manny Rivera (626) 579-7954



Join the CSSA

<http://cssa.myshopify.com/collections/join-cssa>

Cactus & Succulent Society of America

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: JUNE

Prior to the July 12 Board meeting, a motion was made by email, seconded by email and voted on by a majority of the voting members of the BOD, in which the Board approved giving one raffle ticket of the same color being sold that day to each person who brings one or more succulents for display on the Brag Table and the Plant-of-the-Month Table.

Following the regular membership meeting on July 12, 2015, the following members assembled for a meeting of the Board of Directors: Barbara Brooks, Ann Byrne, Ken Byrne, Pat Gilson, Harry Harlow, Mary Harlow, Terry Leivers, Kathie Matsuyama, Wayne Mills, Carol Moss, Markus Mumper, Claudette Rettig, Gene Schroeder, Terry Skillin, Maggie Wagner and David Westberg.

Maggie gave the Treasurer's Report, stated she is handling CGC paperwork, and reported that sales tax for the S&S is being handled by the CPA that was engaged to help with CCCSS financial matters; Ken reported that rent for the Odd Fellows Hall for the coming year is in the hands of Tim, the building manager. It was decided that the Membership Report will include the total new members in the previous month, and a total membership count will be given quarterly. The Board welcomed its newly-elected Members-at-Large, Terry Skillin and David Westberg.

The recent bus trip to The Huntington was discussed. It was agreed that planning for these trips needs to begin earlier. A trip to Lotusland is being investigated. Kathie reported that Jeff Moore, a fairly recent speaker and author of Under the Spell of Succulents (which was very popular with CCCSS members) is interested in selling books at a future S&S.

The Board discussed leadership of the S&S steering committee. Terry said that Rob is willing to be the sole chair if necessary. Someone recalled that the plan several years ago was to have the current President serve as the Show Chair and Ken wasn't given the chance to decline. It was agreed that the current composition of the S&S committee is working well with its experienced members needing little supervision. As always, participation is encouraged. Gene and Kathie are going to do some pre-organization based on Rob's spreadsheet.

Potential workshops were discussed. Gene is contemplating a session on grafting for Spring 2016, and there may be a workshop at the Skillins' this fall to make hypertufa pots. Wayne is beginning to organize a garden tour for next year. Other potential activities were considered, and Wayne is going to organize a car-pool group to attend the Succulent Extravaganza in Castroville in late September. [Note that our very first workshop was held at Charles Varni's home on July 18, presented by Charles, Gene Schroeder and Loring Manley. If you saw all the positive comments about it on Facebook, you know what an enjoyable afternoon was experienced by the participants.]

We had suggestions in the Suggestion Box this month! Keep them coming ... we take them seriously. David is going to be stationed at the POM/Brag table in the future to distribute the raffle ticket rewards. Barbara is going to put a membership blurb in every newsletter. REMINDER: Dues are now over-due. Gene and/or Terry Excel will handle the web page and Facebook issues. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary



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CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE RENEW YOUR DUES BY AUGUST 31.

We would like to remind you it is time to pay your annual membership dues. We value your membership and appreciate your loyalty. We need your membership to continue the many events and benefits our wonderful club offers to you. Please renew your dues by August 31.

Thank you for your continued support of CCCSS!

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Barbara Brooks, Membership Chairperson at barbarahbrooks@sbcglobal.net or (805) 680-1389.

If you cannot make it to the meeting, send your renewal to:
CCCSS Membership, c/o Barbara Brooks, 441 Marsh St., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Membership Dues: Single-\$20 Family-\$25 Business-\$40

POSSIBLE GARDEN TOUR

From Wayne Mills: No promises, but I am looking for succulent gardens include on tours in the North and South Counties. I would like to visit each and take pictures for a future tour or tours. One of our members in San Luis Obispo already volunteered her garden, and I am anxious to visit it. **If you would consider opening your garden** to a tour or tours as we have held in past years, please contact me at 805-481-3495, or at wwmills50@hotmail.com.

NAME TAGS

When a new member joins CCCSS, Carol Moss makes a name badge for them and adds it to the big plastic bin that she brings to each meeting and leaves on the table near the entry so people can pick up their badges on their way in. The badges have unique photos of succulents found on the Internet, but Carol will put any succulent-related picture on someone's badge. It's helpful and friendly if members wear their badges – we have so many members now that it's impossible to remember everyone's name!

Please contact Carol for any special requests or replacements. carolmoss@gmail.com

SUGGESTION BOX

At our meetings, there is a Suggestion Box on the hospitality table for "members questions, comments, compliments (positive reinforcement works too)". All comments are reviewed by the CCCSS Board.

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY



During our June meeting, we introduced “Succulents 101” via Kathie’s slideshow and the 3 Prez’s open Q&A. One common question that we did not cover is the ever present “What kinda plant isit”. We have been advised to learn about the plant by researching origin and habitat information for growing tips. That presents the initial problem of identifying the plant.

Aside from bringing it or a picture to a meeting and asking around there are “Apps for That” and many other online resources. In the “i-world”, Erin recommends “My Garden Answers”.

Another method is to use Google image search. (Warning, your results may be questionable)

My preference is on-line communities that have lots of archived information plus forums that allow you to post images for identification. My favorites include:

- <http://CactiGuide.com> - filled with common Q&A, images, descriptions, lists and links plus an active forum that allows posting of images
- <http://SucculentGuide.com> - like the preceding but dedicated to non-cacti succulents
- <http://www.xericworld.com/forums/index.php> Forum of choice for certified plant nuts and assorted professionals including botanists, nurserymen, landscapers and the like. Plant specific forums, searchable and generally easy on beginners.
- <http://davesgarden.com/community/forums/f/succulents/all/> a great resource for all plant ID searching. Start with the Succulent forum and work your way to the home page.
- <http://www.cactus-mall.com/> the mother portal for all things C&S. Links to everything C&S related worldwide. Time spent getting familiar here is well rewarded
- <http://cssainc.org> Our parent national organization – not easy to navigate but some very good information is hidden here

Once you have a plant name or names, you can really dig in using these:

- <http://www.theplantlist.org/> a working list of all known plant species from a Collaboration between the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Missouri Botanical Garden
- Much of that info came from here: <http://www.tropicos.org/>
- Or here: <http://www.ipni.org/ipni/plantnamesearchpage.do>
- Scientific publications can be found here: <http://Jstor.org/> - university or library connection is needed.

For general keeping up, nothing beats specialist journals such as the CSSA Journal, (included with CSSA membership): Find it at the CSSAinc.org link above.

Lastly, there are the online journals which are a look at the future of specialist publishing. No expensive subscriptions needed. The last few months have produced new editions of some of my favorite downloadable online journals. There are quite a few but here are my current faves:

- <http://www.cactusexplorers.org.uk/journal1.htm> - Great journal, 14 editions to date. Read a few and you’ll be hooked
- <http://www.acta-succulenta.eu/> - Italian journal by Editor, Davide Donati. Select “Download” then select the edition and language of your choice. Then enjoy.
- <http://xerophilia.ro/> - New Zealand based Romanian expat, Eduart Zimer’s great read. Now on edition 13 with 14 available soon. Highly recommended by me.

And, don’t forget to check with the club’s analog library. <http://centralcoastcactus.org/library.html> where you can view or, download a searchable list.

PLANTS FOR SALE

I am having another surgery so I am downsizing...

FOCKEA,
TRICHOADIADEMA,
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YARD SALE ON SATURDAY 8/8 AT 1680 13TH ST.,
LOS OSOS OR CONTACT ME (TERRY EXCELL) AT
txlraiders@gmail.com.



SHOW PHOTOS READY

Our 2015 Show Winner photos are available for viewing online:

<http://TinyURL.com/CCCSS-2015-Show>

Many thanks to Gene Schroeder for the beautiful images!



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