

CENTRAL COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

ON THE DRY SIDE

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JULY 2015



SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

Tony Krock

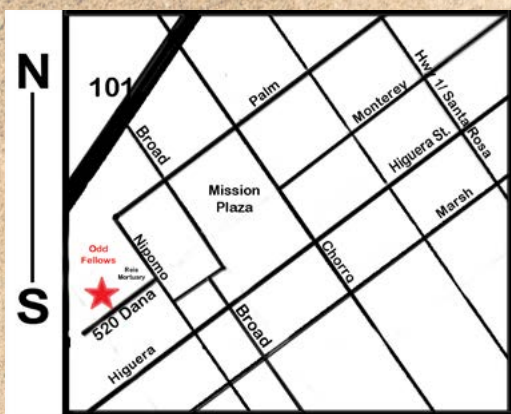
“Hunting Agave utahensis in the southwest states”

Agave utahensis is one of the most northerly distributed Agaves known in the world. This agave occurs in northern Arizona, southeastern California, southern Nevada and Utah. There are two subspecies and three varieties. This plant tolerates cold temperatures down to 0°F, but is poorly tolerant of water in the winter time. Our guest speaker Tony has explored many locations in two of the four states for these varieties of Agave utahensis. He will be showing numerous stunning examples of these plants along with other succulents that he has found in their nearby habitats.

As an expert Agave grower, he will also be explaining how to best cultivate these plants. As an extra bonus, Tony will be bringing small Agave utahensis var. eborispina and other interesting plants to offer for sale.



Tony Krock is familiar to many of our members for his local expertise on growing succulents. Besides Agaves, Tony has built an extensive collection of rare cacti and succulents. He has worked for the last 11 years at Terra Sol Garden Center as one of their plant experts and the Succulent Curator. He has a 20 year professional background in horticulture as a nurseryman, organic farmer and as a broker of rare succulent specimens.



**SUNDAY
JULY 12, 2PM**

**THE ODD FELLOWS HALL
520 DANA ST.
(OFF NIPOMO ST.)**

mark your calendar!

CCSS JUNE MEETING RECAP

Just after 2:00 p.m. on June 14, 2015, President **Ken Byrne** called to order the monthly membership meeting of the Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society. The three flats of succulents brought in by **Rob Skillin** were severely depleted after our nearly forty first-time visitors introduced themselves and were welcomed with a free plant. Some of the folks who brought in snacks deferred picking up their gift until the next meeting.

Last month we changed a few things, including putting the Plant-of-the-Month and Brag Table near the entrance to the meeting hall and having participants fill in an information card describing their plant(s). **Susan Chandler** brought in the only Brag Plant, a flowering *Rebutia* that won a ribbon in the S&S. Ken pointed out that there is an article about Susan in the *Journal Plus Magazine of the Central Coast* describing her championship of disabled rights. **Kathie Matsuyama** had a raise-your-hand survey of the audience which showed overwhelming support for giving a raffle ticket to each participant in the POM/Brag Table as an incentive.

Announcements: **Mary Harlow** had a number of lost items at the Greeter Table. Contact Mary if you lost something at the S&S. **Claudette Rettig** mentioned that some bags of items were missing from the kitchen after the S&S, including personal items. It would be appreciated if the person who mistakenly took those items would return them. **Pat Gilson** is missing some clip boards.

Charles Varni thanked all the volunteers and committee members for their work in making this year's event our most successful show and sale ever. Sales were up a whopping 30 percent over last year, and last year was 25 percent more successful than the previous year. Our reputation is spreading; one vendor told Charles that our S&S is the coolest and friendliest show anywhere. Charles also announced that he and **Loring Manley** will have a hands-on workshop at Charles' house on Saturday, July 18, learning about starting succulents from seeds. There were about ten spots left for the workshop as of the meeting. See last month's newsletter for more information or contact Charles or Loring.

The postponed elections were held at this month's meeting. The slate of candidates is as follows: President – Ken Byrne, Vice-President – Kathie Matsuyama, Secretary – Carol Moss, Treasurer – Maggie Wagner, Publicity – Wayne Mills, Hospitality – Pat Gilson, Newsletter Editor – Erin Stratton, Member-at-Large, Terry Skillin, Member-at-Large, David Westberg. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the assembled members elected the slate as presented by acclamation. We salute Terry Excel, Harry Harlow and Loring Manley who are leaving the Board after many years of service. We sincerely thank them and we hope they stay involved.

Ken read the list of all the winners who were mentioned in the last newsletter. He hopes to be able to name every entrant next year along with the winners in our newsletter. **Terry Skillin** announced details of the volunteer thank you trip to the Huntington on June 27. Rob added that the CSSA show at the Huntington is considered the premier show in the country with the best-of-the-best show plants. (Rob is too modest to admit it, but two years ago his entries blew away the competition). **Susan "Braids" Waidner** said that this year's commemorative t-shirts sold out quickly. If anyone wants to order one or more, contact Braids.

Another change: at this point we took our break. **Gene Schroeder** and **Kathie Matsuyama** sold plants and **Mary Peracca** sold her beautiful pottery. And we enjoyed our treats!

After the break, Kathie presented a PowerPoint program with information helpful to succulent newcomers. [At the Board meeting later, the Board agreed that Kathie's presentation would be ideal for use when outside folks ask for a presentation.] Our four past-presidents – Mary Peracca, Rob Skillin, Gene Schroeder and Charles Varni – took questions from the audience. Some things discussed included the toxicity of *Euphorbia* sap (oozing white stuff you should avoid). It was recommended that any contact with sap be washed with cold water. Gloves and goggles should be used whenever there is a chance of coming in contact with the sap.

Go to the ER if you get it in your eyes. Some people are also sensitive to agaves. Several members shared their bad experiences. It was noted that when succulents turn red, it's usually caused by cold, stress and/or lack of water.



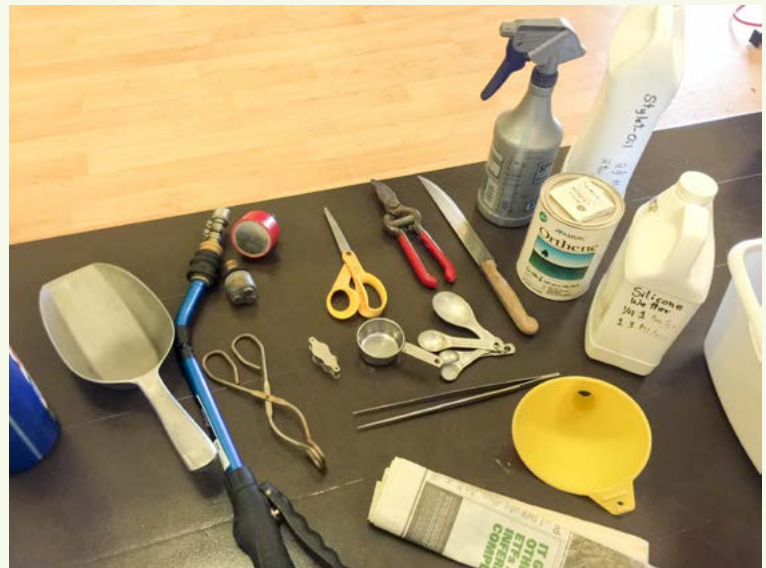
Potting mix was discussed in depth. Most growers make their own custom mix. Some use an OSH product called Black Gold, aerated with pumice. Charles dilutes his Black Gold with red volcanic cinders from AirVol Block – three parts Black Gold to one part cinders. The objective is a soil mix that drains well and dries out in about a week. Rob recommends experimenting and watching the results carefully. You have to find out what works for you. Rob himself uses three different mixes. (1) a rich mix of perlite and coir; (2) for succulents and *Haworthias*, two parts pumice, 1 part perlite and one part coir; (3) for slow-growing plants, a mix of three parts pumice and one part sand (yes, he said sand). Rob rinses the dust off the pumice as it can eventually plug the holes in your pot. Drystall has been recommended by other speakers as a substitute for pumice, but it needs to be screened to a uniform size.

Pots can be cheap growers' pots while the plant is growing. Some synthetic pots can be spiffed up with mineral oil. Ceramic pots are great for show plants and most that are made for succulents have feet to prevent the pot from standing in water. The panel likes to acidify their water (two tablespoons per five gallons of water). Fertilizer should be diluted to quarter strength. A bleach solution (see packaging) is good for disinfecting a pot you plan to re-use.

Cover the hole(s) in the pot with screen or shade cloth or whatever material works for you. Rob reports he had clogged holes with needlepoint

canvas. Some pots require additional holes for good drainage. **Harry Harlow** makes holes with a ceramic drill bit. Target water pH is 5.5 – 6.5. Repot new plants into your own soil mix. When potting, don't water a plant with no roots – wait for signs of growth.

Rob distributed a handout that describes in detail "Products and Suppliers Used by Rob." [NOTE: we are going to add a page to our website for this kind of information.] Rob showed an array of tools he typically uses when dealing with succulents. These included a scooper, watering wand with snap-on heads (mister, soft flow), scissors, pruning shears, measuring spoons (not for kitchen use!), skinny tongs/tweezers, gloves, newspaper – handy for moving spiny things, and a 10x magnifying lens. Pest control described in the handout was discussed. Briefly, 70 percent rubbing alcohol, Stylet-Oil and insecticidal soaps can be used, Systemic chemicals include Imidacloprid and Acephate/ Orthene. Termador (for termites) is reported to be the best ant-control product. A good way to remove spines and glochids is to apply Elmer's Glue, let it dry and peel it off. Sticky tape (Gorilla) or duct tape also works.



When the discussion ended, the drawings were conducted and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary

PLANT OF THE MONTH FOR JULY

PLANTAE, MAGNOLIOPHYTA, LILIOPSIDA, ASPARAGALES, AGAVACEAE



Agave 'Carl's Dwarf'

Agave desmetiana 'Variegata'

Harvesting the Blue Agave, Agave Tequilana

Agave potatorum 'Kichiokan Marginata'

Agave "Blue Bola Select' Marginata'

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, Dasyilirion and Nolina were formerly included in the Agavaceae but are now generally regarded as members of the Nolinaceae. The Old World Dracenaceae was also once grouped with the Agavaceae family but is 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 consists 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 fibers representing the vascular system. Agave leaf fiber was used by Native Americans. Agave fiber from a range of species is of commercial importance, with the best quality fiber 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.

SPECIAL WORKSHOP: STARTING SUCCULENTS FROM SEEDS SATURDAY JULY 18

Join Loring Manley and Charles Varni for a two hour hands-on class focused on starting succulents from seeds. We will meet at Charles' home in Oceano from 2-4 pm and everyone will go home with a lot of potential plants!

This free class is limited to 20 persons and you register by emailing loring.manley@gmail.com. For more information contact Loring or Charles. At the end of class may there be some adult beverages, snacks, and dancing to encourage seed fertility.

FYI: Still 6 spots open in the class.



UPCOMING EVENTS

July 18, 2-4pm

Starting Succulents From Seeds (limited to 20 people). At Charles Varni's house in Oceano. Register at loring.manley@gmail.com.

July 24-26

Orange County C&S S&S (949-212-8417)

August 8 & 9

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

August 9

CCCSS Monthly Meeting, 2pm, Odd Fellow's Hall

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

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

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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: JUNE

When the chairs and tables were put away, the following members assembled for the Board of Directors meeting: Barbara Brooks, Ann Byrne, Ken Byrne, Pat Gilson, Harry Harlow, Mary Harlow, Kathie Matsuyama, Wayne Mills, Carol Moss, Gene Schroeder, Rob Skillin, Terry Skillin, Erin Stratton and Charles Varni.

Next fiscal year's rent for the Odd Fellows Hall in the amount of \$1,500 has been paid. Ten new memberships were taken by Barbara along with numerous renewals. The show and sale steering committee will meet on Wednesday, July 1, for a review of the S&S in anticipation of next year's show and sale. The trip to the Huntington on June 27 was discussed. It was suggested that our web site should include a page for things like Rob's handouts today and other general information about succulents and their care. Erin mentioned a smart phone app that identifies plants by matching your photograph with a plant in its database. Look for **My Garden Answers** in the app store. Workshops were discussed. Charles said there are about ten spots left in the growing-from-seed workshop. Terry said a member is interested in hosting a workshop on making containers from concrete, pumice and peat. The Board decided to reimburse Charles and Loring for the cost of their workshop materials. Rob updated the Board on the current status of CSSA, including the fact that Gregg de Chirico has resigned as president. Gene suggested CCCSS becoming a separate division under CGCI. And the

CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 wvmills50@hotmail.com.

MORE 2015 SHOW & SALE SHIRTS

From Braids: For all of you club members who wanted a 2015 Show & Sale Shirt, we are considering making another order of the 'Mens' short sleeved shirts! The price will stay the same at \$10.00 and available in sizes Small to 2X in the same color (Ash). I will have another "reserved sign-up sheet" at the July meeting so I can make an accurate order. Anyone who is sure they want one, please either sign up at the meeting or email me at braids1997@gmail.com so that no one is left out, including all our new members!

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.

LIBRARY BOOKS MIA????

The library's list of outstanding/overdue books has grown quite large. Please, everyone, have a look about and return any books so that they may become available for others.



Please contact Gene Schroeder
Leschroeder@earthlink.net

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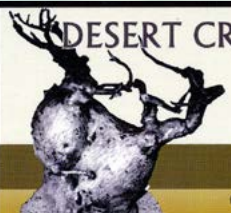
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(All submissions to the CCCSS newsletter must be submitted two weeks prior to the monthly meeting.)