

On the Dry Side

JANUARY 2014

CCCSS December Meeting Recap

12/8/2013

HOLIDAY PARTY

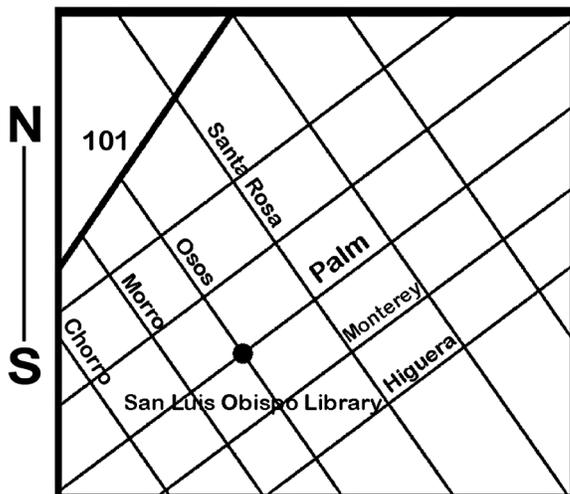
The December Meeting of the CCCSS was a joyous holiday celebration. We all enjoyed various delicious dishes brought by the members with the turkey and ham furnished by the club. Space was tight but next year we look forward to a new venue. We had our silent auction in the hallway; items were donated by club members. As usual, Nick Wilkinson and Charles Spotts did a magnificent job with the live auction! They always promote the items with humor and knowledge... even if you do not plan to purchase an item, you cannot help but get the itch to bid! Our Prez even auctioned off his prize winning *Sansiveria*- OH MY! One of the highlights of the party was an award presented to Charles Spotts in recognition for his long years of service to the club.



photos by
Rob Skillin



NEXT MEETING:



**Sunday
January 12 at
2:00 pm**

**San Luis Obispo
Public Library**

**995 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo**

*Find us on
Facebook.
Just click this
link and ask to
join the group!*



January Speaker!

An Opuntoid Sampler

by Dr. Charles Spotts

This month, Charles will be giving a presentation on one of his favorite groups of plants, *opuntias*. He will take us on a geographic tour thru a variety of opuntoids looking at the habitats of this genus with an incredibly far-reaching range of distribution. He will also discuss the changes in the world of opuntoids since he wrote the *Opuntia* newsletter article first published in August 2006. Don't miss this great presentation on these fascinating plants! Charles will also bring plants for sale.



Charles is a retired Professor of Microbiology and Cell Biology from California State University, Northridge. He has collected succulents since 1978, starting with a few patio plants from a yard sale and gradually becoming an avid collector and exhibitor of a wide variety of succulent plants, mostly cacti. He maintains extensive collections of *Opuntioideae*, *Gymnocalycium* and *Haworthia*. Charles has traveled throughout Peru, Argentina, Baja California, Mainland Mexico, the Virgin Islands, and our own Mojave, Chihuahuan, and Sonoran deserts in search of cacti in habitat. He has been an active member of a number of Cactus and Succulent clubs and served two terms as president of the Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society. Charles served as Co-Chairman and Treasurer of the Intercity Cactus and Succulent Show for 13 years. His plants have won numerous awards at the Cactus and Succulent Society of America Show and the Intercity Cactus and Succulent Show, two of the largest succulent shows in the world. He is an accredited CSSA judge.

WE ARE MOVING OUR MEETINGS BEGINNING IN FEBRUARY!

Due to the incredible growth in membership, we have outgrown our present home!
(all of you that come to the meetings have surely noticed it is "standing room only")

STARTING FEBRUARY 9, 2014,
WE WILL BE MEETING AT

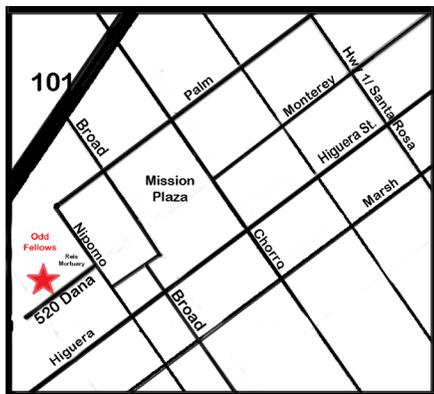
THE ODD FELLOWS HALL
520 DANA STREET (off Nipomo St)



WHEELCHAIR ACCESS



PLENTY OF FREE PARKING



Plant of the Month: Opuntia

by Dr. Charles Spotts (Reprinted from CCCSS newsletter 8/2006)

Opuntias have been used for centuries by native americans for food (prickly pears, nopales, tunas), drink, building material and fiber, and still continue to be so used in many areas. In some regions the flat padded opuntias (*Platyopuntias*) are used as animal food and the name is said to originate from a thistle-like plant in the region of the Opuntiani, a Greek tribe.

If we accept the genus in its broadest sense (e.g. sensu Benson), we find its distribution to have the greatest range of any genus in the cactus family, from Southern Alaska and Canada to the tip of South American, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coasts; with representatives in nearly every ecological zone except perhaps the Amazon Basin. Many have become naturalized in other areas of the world: Hawaii, Africa, Australia, etc., where they grow profusely, sometimes displacing native vegetation.

Most familiar opuntias are large and stately, often constituting the dominating features of the landscape. The very features which make these plants so attractive in their habitat, their size and dominating features, make them a problem in the home garden or greenhouse, therefore they are rarely grown except as landscape plants, and even more rarely exhibited. *Opuntias* are generally easy to grow; except for the tropical forms, most can tolerate a cold winter in Southern California. They grow relatively rapidly and appreciate a good supply of water in the spring and fall. It is possible to maintain many of the moderate sized opuntias as small plants for a while in pots, and one will occasionally see beautiful specimens of *O. erinacea* v. *ursina*, *O. basilaris*, *O. fulgida* v. *monstrose*, or *O. violacea*, but these will soon outgrow their container and need frequent pruning. There are, however, several smaller species which make good container plants, including some of the *tephrocacti*, *corynopuntias*, and *Pterocactus*.

The remaining forms, the cast majority of the species, are sometimes all lumped together into what we are hazily familiar with as "*opuntias*"—prickly pears and chollas. It is this remaining group which has received most recent investigation. These remaining species exhibit an extreme diversity of size, form, structure, and flowering behavior, to the extent that many authorities now divide the group into as many as 15 genera, while others, being more cautious, define only 5 or 6, often recognizing some of the more specialized forms as subgenera. Because of these differences of opinions, it is impossible to define most of the genera without ambiguity. All *opuntias* are characterized by the presence of glochids (very fine barbed spines) in the areoles adjacent to the spines and transient but noticeable leaves usually present in young shoots or stems,

but which fall off early except in some species. Their flowers are borne laterally, close to the end (terminal in some species) of the joints on a short tube. Stamens are sensitive and fold inward when touched, then curve back after a few minutes. Petals are yellow, golden, red, wine-colored; usually satin-like and glossy. Stigma lobes yellow or green. Growth is determinate, that is, growth stops at the end of the growing season and then starts anew from a different areole next season, leading to jointed stems which may be cylindrical, flattened, or club-shaped.



Tephrocactus geometricus

A somewhat logical and obvious subdivision can be made between *opuntias* with cylindrical stems (the *cylindropuntias* or chollas), those with flattened stems (*platyopuntias* or prickly pears), and those with club-shaped stems (*corynopuntias* or *sphaeropuntias* or club chollas). Further, there appears to be a somewhat natural distinction between the *opuntias* of North America, and those of South America, the dividing line running approximately from Southern Peru through Brazil. The *cylindropuntias* of North America have sheathed spines; those of South America do not. The *platyopuntias* and *sphaeropuntias* show a disjunct distribution, there being no *sphaeropuntias* in central or northern South America, and no *platyopuntias* in the Amazon Basin or Central Peru. Based on these structural and geographic differences at least 18 genera have been erected



Tunilla erectoclada

within the opuntioids at one time or another. Several of these are now accepted by many of the cactus experts, others are rejected, and some are subject to further analysis. If you can locate your species under "*Opuntia*" in your favorite reference, try looking it up under one of the following: *Austrocylindropuntia*, *Brasiliopuntia*, *Consolea*, *Coryneopuntia*, *Cumulopuntia*, *Cylindropuntia*, *Grusonia*, *Marenopuntia*, *Maihueniopsis*, *Micropuntia*, *Nopalea*, *Puna*, *Tacinga*, *Tephrocactus*, or *Tunilla*.



Tephrocactus weberi

Growth is determinate, that is, growth stops at the end of the growing season and then starts anew from a different areole next season, leading to jointed stems which may be cylindrical, flattened, or club-shaped.



Maihueniopsis bolivianus



Opuntia quimilo

Upcoming Events

Jan 19

CSSA Board of Directors Meeting, Huntington Botanical Gardens.

Feb 8

San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Show and Sale, Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego, CA. For information:858-3821797.

Mar 28-30

Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Show and Sale. Fri/Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4. 1000 S. State College Blvd. Anaheim, CA. 562-587-3357.

April 12-13

South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Show and Sale. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA. 310-378-1953.

April 27

Huntington Plant Sale. Huntington Botanical Gardens. 10-5. 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino, CA. For info: 626-405-2160.

NEW 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 a new 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](#)

MEMBERS: GIVE US YOUR INPUT

Do you think you would participate in a workshop and/or focus group?
What would you like to learn to do in a hands-on workshop at a member's home?
What would you like to study in a focus group in a member's home?
Do you like the idea of a pot-luck meal after the session?
Would you be willing to host a workshop or focus group?

Please send Carol your comments and responses and she will compile them to the members who are organizing this potential new program. Carol.moss@gmail.com

YOUR INTEREST IS CRUCIAL!

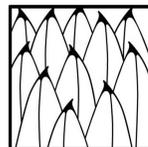
NAME TAGS

Name tags for members who joined CCCSS in January or later are in the accordion file at the front desk. If you don't have a name tag or would like a new one, please contact Carol at: carol.moss@gmail.com

She will put one in the file for you the following meeting. Carol will put a personal succulent photo on it if you send one to her.

Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society
On the web at: <http://centralcoastcactus.org/>

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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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OPUNTIA, TRY THIS LINK:
<http://opuntiads.com/D/more-opuntiads/published-literature/>
 This site has great images of opuntia in habitat.



Opuntia humifusa

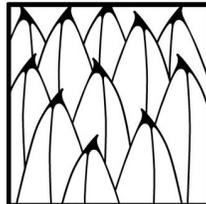
COPING WITH THE COLD

Our new Member-At-Large, Loring Manley, would like to compile an educational resource for coping with winter conditions in our area to be posted on the CCCSS website when completed. He would like to have specific ideas for our multiple microclimates. If you have any "tricks" for keeping your plants happy and healthy over the winter months, let Loring know!

loring.manley@gmail.com

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