

On the Dry Side

NOVEMBER 2013

CCCSS October Meeting Recap

10/20/2013

October has been a busy month for CCCSS's Board of Directors. Projects included scouting out possible new meeting venues and trying to make sure everyone knew that our October meeting had been rescheduled to the third Sunday. President Charles Varni was participating in the Open Studios Tour, so Vice-President Kathie Matsuyama welcomed the large crowd and congratulated everyone for remembering the changed meeting date. Attendees included two special categories of guests: members of the California Garden Clubs, Moñtana Del Oro Chapter, who held their regional meeting in the adjoining room prior to joining us for our meeting. The other special group consisted of our first-time visitors who numbered at least two dozen and who each received a free succulent to thank and welcome them. Members who provided refreshments chose their plants from the huge selection brought by our featured speaker, Robin Stockwell. Special thanks to our Member-at-Large/ Prickly Pair greeters, Harry and Mary Harlow, who made sure that nothing on Robin's tables grew legs and helped with sales.

Announcements: • The holiday potluck is December 8 at the library. Please sign up with Pat Gilson and let her know what you plan to bring. We have rented the room across the hall to ease the crowding for this very popular event. Initial plans are to have the items in the silent auction in the adjacent room and food in the hallway. • Members were urged to renew their memberships and were reminded that newsletter subscriptions were cancelled for members who have not renewed. • Woody Minnich was at the meeting after conducting the plant auction at the Spotts' home the previous day – what a perfect way for cactus lovers to spend a beautiful fall afternoon. Woody praised the growth of our club and mentioned that the oldest succulent club in the United States, the Long Beach Cactus and Succulent Society (now located in nearby Bixby Knolls) will be holding its first-ever show and sale May 17 & 18, 2014.

The October Plant-of-the-Month was Sempervivums, members of the Crassulaceae family. In addition to conducting this month's meeting and stalking nurserymen, Kathie wrote the article and gave the talk on the Plant-of-the-Month. Sempervivum evolved under harsh growing conditions in rocky areas throughout much of central and southern Europe and eastern Asia. They have long tap roots for finding their way through cracks in rocks; they are monocarpic (they die after flowering) but produce many pups and reproduce rapidly. They are cold-tolerant, they don't like shade or hot sun and don't want to be waterlogged. Deer love them. Propagation is best by offshoot because the seeds are not true to their parentage. There are many cultivars such as the popular hen and chickens, *S. tectorum*. Sempervivum (which means to live forever) feature rosettes and they all tend to look somewhat alike. Some are hairy, and all produce beautiful and relatively large flowers. They can have problems with mealy bugs and the usual treatment of using alcohol on the pests was recommended.

Rob then described the plants on the Brag Table, many of them brought in by Larry (the Snake) Stabler. Thank you Snake and everyone else who brings in plants ... I'm sorry I can't name each of you here ... but please know we appreciate the opportunity to see other people's beauties. Rob also described the Raffle Plants and mentioned that Ariocarpus are in bloom now and the winter growers are starting to flower.

Several books were recommended that Robin had for sale, books that are no longer widely available, but which can be found for a good price on Robin's site. They are by Australian authors Rudolf Schulz and Attila Kapitany. Succulents/ Care and Health and Succulent Propagation are two of their best. Mr. Schulz individually has a book named simply *Aeonium*, and it is rumored that Mr. Kapitany may speak to us in the future. Robin himself is working on a book that is intended to update information in the Schulz and Kapitany books. Librarian Gene Schroeder has added some of these books to our collection.

In the introduction of our speaker, Kathie mentioned that she has been pursuing Robin Stockwell for the past three years (to the point of "stalking him" according to her description) in trying to get him to speak to us. Robin has a large nursery in Castroville – Succulent Gardens/ The Growing Grounds – located in the foggy coastal foothills, open Tuesday through Saturday. The nursery recently hosted Succulent Extravaganza which Wayne Mills wrote about in the last issue of *On the Dry Side*. (It would be a great event for a CCCSS day trip next year.) Robin is considered an industry leader in succulents and is known for his rotating, 10-foot-diameter globe covered completely in succulents. Robin's focus is using succulents as functional objects versus the usual emphasis on collecting. He showed slides of planted areas that combine his preferred features of form, color and texture into an integrated design. Robin doesn't concentrate on growing unusual or exotic plants, but values succulents that may be considered common by collectors.

Robin recommends frost fabric to protect sensitive plants from damaging cold. It provides an extra four to eight degrees of protection and light transmits through the fabric. He suggested putting it in place a few days before a frost is due and leaving it on for a few days after. Someone asked if wet or dry soil is better protection when it freezes. Robin said he didn't know the answer, but has observed that dehydrated soil seems to fare better and said there is more damage during a wet freeze than during a dry freeze. He showed slides of the many Blue Glow agaves in the ground at his nursery and says they are able to withstand cold to 26 degrees. Aloe polyphylla does well at the nursery – they don't like hot climates.

Robin sells a vertical gardening system of plastic modular wall panels with 45 slots that are filled with potting mix and succulent cuttings. There are about 235 cuttings in a wall panel and the cuttings can be reused in two to three years when the plants get overgrown and less attractive. (His globe contains 30,000 cuttings). The planted panels require good aeration and can be watered by lying flat, watering, and rehangng or a drip line can be installed across the top of the wall panels. Visit his website for more information on books and materials. Sgplants.com.

(continued top of page 2)

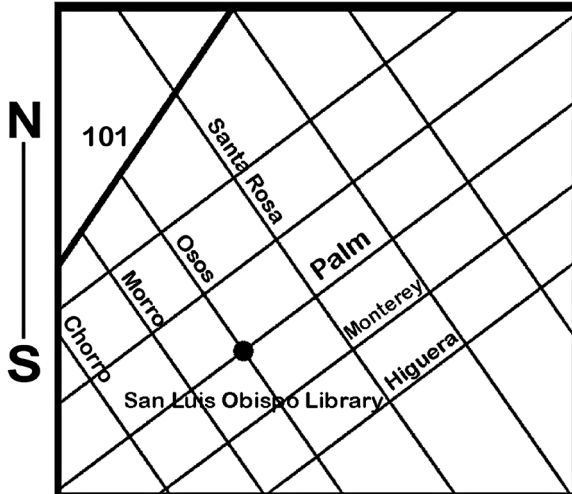
October Meeting Minutes..... continued from page 1

Some other information gleaned from Robin's talk: ◇Plants are plants. Some have special needs but they all bloom, make seeds, etc. ◇Grow plants close together – it eliminates weeds. ◇Grow plants as best you can and if you have a problem, deal with it. ◇Water after planting or repotting to encourage root-system growth. ◇Soak dehydrated or shriveled plants, then wait a week or ten days before watering again. ◇Native soils: Sand = organic supplement; Clay = amend to break down and loosen; Heavy loam = too moist. ◇Plants need to be fertilized to grow and be healthy. What kind? 10-10-10 or 20-20-20 cut to half recommended strength. ◇Fish emulsion (as fertilizer) has oil that interferes with the plant's foliage, so if you use it, water the soil, not the plant. If it is mixed with water, go back and rinse with clear water to remove the chemicals. ◇Gophers love agave. ◇Kill snails. ◇Eat snails.

After the break and the raffles, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary

NEXT MEETING:



**Sunday
November 10
at 2:00 pm**

**San Luis Obispo
Public Library**

**995 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo**

STOCKING STUFFERS???

T-SHIRTS AND CAPS

If you would like to purchase a club t-shirt or hat, please contact Susan (aka. "Braids") braids97@sbcglobal.net And she will bring your item to the meeting. The shirts are \$10 and the hats are \$12.



SPEAKER OF THE MONTH
Gregg DeChirico

Gregg DeChirico has grown plants of all types for over 30 years. He has a nursery, Gregg's Greenhouse, located in the Santa Barbara area, specializing in seed-grown, rare and exotic plants. Gregg is a frequent participant and vendor at many local and regional club shows and sales. He has travelled throughout Latin America to photograph the local flora and fauna, featured in many of the programs he offers. Gregg served as president of both the San Francisco Succulent & Cactus Society and the Santa Barbara Cactus & Succulent Society, and is the current President of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America (CSSA) through 2015.



Presentation topic: Gregg DeChirico will offer a short presentation featuring successful cultural guidelines for growing Tillandsias in Coastal California -from San Francisco to San Diego. The program will cover basic Tillandsia care and also offer a selection of species featured in the gardens of Santa Barbara residents and recommended for growing both indoors and outdoors in coastal California. Gregg is a keen advocate of growing compatible tillandsia species among succulents in a varied collection.
Tillandsias

CCCSS DECEMBER HOLIDAY POTLUCK

DECEMBER 8 at 2PM

It's that time of year again, holiday season. As many of you may know, our December meeting is a potluck dinner/lunch with a plant auction and social get together. Our chance to celebrate the holidays Cactus and Succulent style. As always, the club will supply turkey and ham main dishes. Sign up sheets for those wishing to provide appetizers, salads, other main and side dishes and/or dessert and those who would like to volunteer for set up and clean up duties will be at the November meeting. We'll need to know how many people will attend. Those of you who will be attending the dinner/lunch, but will not be at the November meeting give me a call @ 805-481-5596 or email me hupt74@att.net. Hope to see you there!--Pat Gilson/Hospitality



DECEMBER AUCTIONS: LIVE AND SILENT

As we have done in the past, we will be having two auctions at our December potluck, and we are looking for donations to each. Donations to the silent auction are 100% donations to the club, and this has been a great way for us to raise funds in the past. Please bring anything that relates to our hobby – plants, pots, top dressing, whatever seems right. The bidding forms will be provided – you just need to set a starting bid amount, and the bid increment.

For the live auction, we need about 15 nice show quality plants. If you have something you would like to be considered, contact Markus Mumper at markusmumper@gmail.com 805 458-9816 [days], 805 773-1499 [evenings] A picture would be appreciated. If your submittal is accepted for the auction, you will receive 75% of the winning bid, and 25% will go to the club.



IMPORTANT LIBRARY INFORMATION

Members may check out books on a monthly basis. If there is a specific book you are interested in, please contact our librarian, Gene Schroeder (CCCSS.library@gmail.com), so he will be sure to bring it to the next monthly meeting (the library is too large to bring all the books to every meeting).

This list is by book title but if you download a copy, it can be searched for any individual word.

[Link to a downloadable copy of our list of library books.](#)

Titles in **RED** will be considered “reference” or “reserve” only and must be requested in advance for checkout. Those marked are of very high value and most of them are irreplaceable except at great cost. In consideration of this, they will be tightly controlled.

The most popular titles based on checkout activity will be at each meeting. Please contact the librarian at the meeting or via email if you wish a specific title to be at a future meeting.

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!

BOARD UPDATES

Sunday, September 29, 2013

On Sunday, September 29, 2013, members of CCCSS and the Board of Directors met at 4:00 p.m. at the Elks Lodge in San Luis Obispo for a supplemental meeting. The following members/officers were present, constituting a quorum: Charles Varni, Kathie Matsuyama, Loring Manley, Pat Gilson, Wayne Mills, Nancy Greene, Harry Harlow, Mary Harlow and Carol Moss.

Old business discussed was the proposal that CCCSS sponsor a scholarship in some way. Kathie Matsuyama continues to investigate this possibility.

The Board briefly discussed how to correctly incorporate the recently adopted policy regarding advertising in *On The Dry Side*. The issue was not completely resolved, but the Board needs to review the Standing Rules and ByLaws to determine the correct procedure.

Several members mentioned an organization on the Internet with which they are familiar – Succulent Fanatics, with around 1500 members. One of their activities is presenting workshops at someone's house. These workshops have a limited number of signups and include a pot-luck meal after an expert presents a hands-on workshop. This concept was enthusiastically embraced by the members. A corollary idea was a similar format for study groups. Loring is going to investigate workshops, and Harry is interested in forming study groups. After a very productive hour-and-a-half meeting, we adjourned at 5:45.

October 20, 2013

Following the general membership meeting on Sunday, October 20, 2013, the Board assembled for its meeting. In attendance were Kathie Matsuyama, Markus Mumper, Rob and Terry Skillin, Gene Schroeder, Wayne Mills, Pat Gilson, Harry & Mary Harlow and Carol Moss.

Rob Skillin announced that he will reserve the room across the hall from our meeting room in December for the silent auction and suggested that the food be placed in the hallway. Markus agreed to be in charge of arrangements for the auction plants at the December feast. We plan to have fifteen good-quality show plants in the live auction; CCCSS will receive 25 percent of the price and the remaining 75 percent will go to the donating owner. People who want to enter plants in the live auction must submit a photo and description to Markus with a suggested reserve price.

Other matters discussed by the Board included Rob reserving the library rooms for the period January through May and reserving the Ludwick Community Center for our May Show and Sale. Either or both can be cancelled without penalty. Special activities for the December event were discussed and arrangements were made for carrying out those plans. Staffing appointments and changes were briefly discussed and deferred to the next fully attended meeting. Gene will update the Standing Rules and will post the text of the recently adopted rule regarding advertising on the website and in *On the Dry Side*. Workshops and focus groups were discussed, including plans for presenting Cactus and Succulents 101 again after the next show and sale. We agreed to ask the membership to submit ideas for off-site workshops and focus groups; possible topics mentioned were grafting, greenhouses, varmints, etc. Harry Harlow will make a presentation to the Board (Harry will miss the November meeting). Ron of Ron's Nursery in Grover Beach has offered his shop for hands-on workshops on container gardens for ten to twelve people for no or minimal charge, depending on the details. A South County Succulent Tour was suggested for before May's S&S. Possible stops mentioned were the Schroeders, Skillins, Wagner/ Mumper, Kuns and Baskins. A possible catered lunch at one of the stops was being considered and one-half of a Prickly Pair appeared to volunteer his home – it seemed as if his wife Terry agreed.

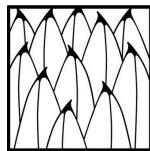
Before rushing out to make the 5:30 p.m. deadline, Harry said that in his and Mary's absence Randy Ball will be the greeter at the November meeting.

Reported by

Carol Harlow Moss, Secretary (Condensed by Terry Excell, Newsletter Editor)

Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society

On the web at: <http://centralcoastcactus.org/>



EDITOR: Terry Excell: txlraiders@gmail.com

1680 13th St. Los Osos, CA, 93402

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

CLUB OFFICERS/ CONTACT INFORMATION

PRESIDENT

Charles Varni
charles@varni.org
459-6698

VICE PRESIDENT

Kathie Matsuyama
luvbigdogs@earthlink.net
929-4692

SECRETARY

Carol Moss
carol.moss@gmail.com
438-4906

TREASURER

Maggie Wagner
margaretwagner@gmail.com
773-1499

CSSA AFFILIATE

Rob Skillin
709-3033

AT-LARGE

Pending

AT-LARGE

Harry Harlow
maryharlow50@gmail.com
438-5308

LIBRARIAN

Gene Schroeder
Leschroeder@earthlink.net
929-2161

PUBLICITY

Nancy Greene
neikicccss@gmail.com
723-4325

HOSPITALITY

Pat Gilson
hupt74@att.net
481-5596

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.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Succulents in the Bromeliaceae

by Gene Schroeder



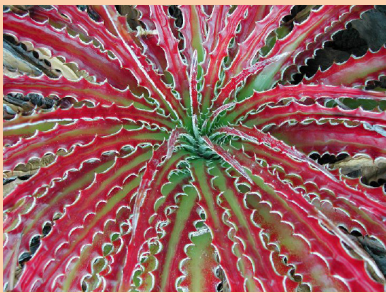
Plants in this family, more commonly known as the bromeliads, have long drawn the interest of specialist groups such as Bromeliad Society International <http://www.bsi.org/new/> - and its many affiliate chapters.

The base description is of small to large herbs or shrubby, terrestrial or often epiphytic rosettes of leaves often covered with trichomes or, water absorbing scales. Inflorescences may be terminal or lateral and the bracts are often brightly colored. The estimated 56 genera containing over 2600 species are found throughout tropical and subtropical America. They have been long known in cultivation with records indicating that in 1493 Columbus saw *Ananas comosus* (pineapple) cultivated in Guadalupe. This plant also appears as a symbol in the Cascajal Block, considered the key to the first writings in the new world attributed to the Olmec people.

Cascajal Block →



Bromeliads have been especially popular, and successful, as house and foliage plants resulting in almost countless hybrids and cultivars being available. In general, most do not consider them succulent but this character is well developed in quite a few taxa, mainly as leaf succulence. Thus, they are an important component of the flora in many arid regions.



Hechtia texensis

This large family is divided into three subfamilies, each containing plants of interest to us. The most primitive of these is the Pitcairniodeae, containing 16 genera and 1000+ species. These are usually referred to as terrestrial bromeliads - they grow in the ground (terrestrial) or on rocks (saxicolous). Well known and popular succulents are found in the genera *Hechtia*, *Dyckia*, *Deuterocohnia*, and *Puya*.



Deuterocohnia brevifolia

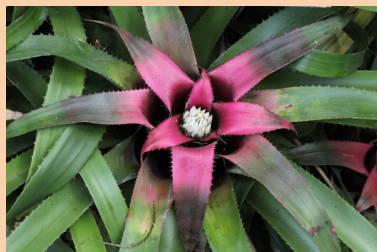


Spanish moss

The Tillandsiodeae subfamily contains the least number of genera (9) but the most species (1200+). Most are epiphytic or lithophytic, adsorbing water and nutrients from the air. Smooth, unarmed leaves, often fragrant flowers and feathery or winged seeds. They are probably the most evolved of the family and the best adapted to survival in arid conditions. Well deserving of being called xerophytes. The best known plant in the group is surely *Tillandsia usneoides* (Spanish moss). Many other choice plants occur in the genera *Catopsis*, *Guzmania*, *Tillandsia* and *Vriesea*.



Guzmania osyana



Neoregelia pendula

The subfamily Bromelioideae is the most diverse although smallest having 32 genera and 800+ species. Most are epiphytes but a few, like pineapple, adapt to terrestrial growth. They are the least succulent group with the most adapted in *Cryptanthus* (Earth flower). More commonly seen are plants in *Aechmea* (spear plants), *Billbergia* (for their colorful flowers), and *Neoregelia* (for brightly colored or striped leaves). And don't forget the *Ananas*, you might want dessert.



Aechmea biflora

Some more web links to the world of Bromeliads:

My main source: - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bromeliaceae>

Some good Tillandsia info: - https://www.birdrocktropicals.com/Tillandsia_default.htm

Amazing photos from the home of Dyckias: - <http://dyckiabrazil.blogspot.com/>

For the natives: - <http://www.bromeliads.info/archives/native-bromeliads-of-the-united-states>



Puya alpestris



Dyckia fosteriana



Tillandsia aeranthos

PLANT NEEDS A HOME!!!!!!



SANTA MARIA -EMAIL JOHN BENEDETTI

johnbenedetti1@gmail.com

Desert Creations

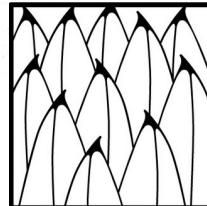
(one of our business members)

End of the Year Sale on Saturday, November 23rd
(9am to 4pm).

Save at least 20 percent on all plants.
Local clubs receive 10 percent back on the total purchase (not including taxes) made by members.

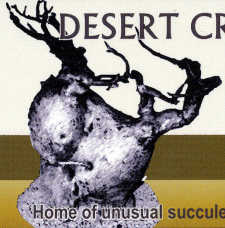
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