



# ON THE DRY SIDE

CENTRAL COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

JULY 2019

## OUR JULY SPEAKER: WOODY MINNICH

Woody Minnich grew up in the Mojave Desert and has had an attraction to desert plants and animals since the early 1950's. He has been involved with the cactus and succulent world as a grower, field explorer, club and organization leader, writer, photographer, lecturer and presenter.



Woody is mostly known for giving presentations on his field work from the places he has traveled, such as Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Madagascar, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Peru, Socotra, South Africa, the United States, and Yemen. He is also recognized for having operated the nursery, Cactus Data Plants, since 1975. Woody's show quality plants are often considered one of the standards for staging and horticultural achievement. Some of his favorite genera include *Adenium*, *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Copiapoa*, *Cyphostemma*, *Gymnocalycium*, *Lithops*, *Mammillaria*, *Melocactus*, *Pachypodium*, and *Pachycauls* in general.

He has published numerous articles in various journals, and his photography is featured in many books including *The Copiapoa* by Schulz, *The Mammillaria Handbook* by Pilbeam, *The Cactus Lexicon* by Hunt and Charles, among others. In November 2017, he was the featured primary photographer in the book *The Xerophile*. He is also featured in electronic articles about conservation from MNN (Mother Nature Network) and *The Guardian* newspaper.

Woody and his wife, Kathy, live in Cedar Grove, New Mexico. Now retired, he was a secondary school teacher of graphics, art and architecture for 32 years. As an educator, he has become an important part of the cactus & succulent hobby and thus is an honorary life member of eleven C&S societies. With 49 years in the hobby and 64 years in the field, he has many experiences to share and numerous photos to show.

## 20 Years in the Atacama, Land of the Copiapoas by Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich

Similar to the coast of Namibia, the coastal and inland regions of northern Chile, known as the Atacama, is mainly watered by amazing fogs—"the Camanchacas." These fog-fed regions, in two of the driest deserts in the world, have some of the most interesting cactus and succulents to be found anywhere. The Atacama of northern Chile has an endemic genus considered by many to be one of the most dramatic to have ever evolved: the *Copiapoa*. This ancient genus is also believed to be tens of thousands of years old, and there are those who feel it might well be on its way out! The ocean currents that affect the coastal Atacama have changed considerably over the last hundreds of years, and now its primary source of moisture is the consistent dense fog. The plants that have evolved here live almost entirely off the heavy condensation from the Camanchaca.

There are many different *Copiapoa* species ranging from small quarter-sized subterranean geophytes to giant 1,000-year-old, 300-head mounding clusters. Thanks to Rudolf Schulz's excellent field work and his two comprehensive *Copiapoa* books, we have all been introduced to these amazing plants. Having worked with Rudolf in Chile, I can honestly say that the genus *Copiapoa* is without comparison! With this presentation, I hope to taxonomically introduce you to most of the *Copiapoa* species. Along with the *Copiapoa*, we will also encounter many other genera including the *Neochilenias*, *Neoporterias*, *Eriocyce*, *Eulychnias*, *Trichocereus*, as well as many of the other Chilean succulents.

In August 2018, I had the pleasure of leading a group of 20 cactophiles in 7 four-wheel drive trucks. Most of our group were younger (25-35yrs), and they all wanted to see how us old-timers (Rudolf, Ritter, Charles and myself) used to do our explorations in the wild. We took them on some very bad roads, and had them camp out in the middle of nowhere, with scorpions. These camp-outs were exceptional as we could often see, without light pollution, the Southern Cross and the Magellanic Lights. The energy of the young people and my memories of the last 20+ years in Chile made this an epic adventure. Join me at the meeting, where I'll share our exhilarating experience and the overall magic of this wonderful arid region, the Atacama.

Our next meeting is Sunday, July 14th at 2pm  
Odd Fellows Hall, 520 Dana Street, San Luis Obispo

# PLANT OF THE MONTH: MELOCACTUS



Pictured, top to bottom:

- *Melocactus azureus*
- *Melocactus paucispinus*
- *Melocactus zehntneri* (unusual form)



Melocactus is a genus of aesthetically interesting cacti distinguishable by their odd cephalium that protrudes from the top. The cephalium, which is a bristly collection of aureoles, is designed to produce flowers and fruit and can grow up to three feet tall, taller than the plant itself. Cephaliums are red or white and form small pink flowers inside their mass and their fruits are waxy and shaped like tubes. Because of their appearance, Melocactus are popular cacti in cultivation. They are native to places with high temperatures and cannot tolerate frost: in the wild, they grow in various parts of the Caribbean, South America (especially Brazil), and Mexico.

Notably, Melocactus plants only develop their distinctive look once they reach maturity. At the beginning of their lives, their appearance is typical of most cacti: they're globular and ribbed all over with aureoles. They only develop the cephalium once they're fully developed and once it begins growing it won't stop until the plant itself dies. They can be a bit of challenge due to some specificities in their care requirements and are a better choice for experienced cactus growers.

## Growing Conditions

**Light:** Lots and lots of bright sunlight are necessary for Melocactus to thrive.

**Water:** They like fairly moist environments, so water regularly, especially during the growing season. Make sure not to let them sit in water to avoid rotting the roots.

**Temperature:** Warm tropical temperatures above 70 F.

**Soil:** Most cactus potting mixes should work fine, ideally a well-draining mix with some organic material.

**Fertilizer:** Use a balanced, diluted fertilizer, like a 20-20-20 mixed into their water during the growing season.

## Propagation

These cacti are not difficult to propagate from seed. Plant seeds that have been soaked in warm water for several hours in a well-aerated soil, then seal the newly planted pots in a Zip Lock bag to keep in heat and moisture. Their root systems will take a little while to develop, so don't overwater or overfeed them before they have the necessary equipment. Remember, always use fresh seeds: they should be dry before you soak them.

## Repotting

Melocactus like to be fairly packed in so keep them in a fairly small container that slightly constricts their roots. Repotting them at the beginning of the growing season is a good idea until they form cephaliums and the bodies stop growing. Once the cephalium starts growing they do not need to be potted up in larger containers but may benefit from a repotting in the same size container but with refreshed soil.

Plant of the Month courtesy of Markus Mumper  
Photos provided by Rob Skillin

# CSSA CONVENTION UPDATES • SAN LUIS OBISPO • JULY 17–20, 2019

## WE STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS FOR THE 2019 CSSA CONVENTION!

**THANK YOU** to those who have already signed up for their volunteer slots!

We still need many “Cashiers” and “Cashier Assistants” – which are CSSA’s names for what our CCCSS Show/Sale calls “Pre-Check”... count up the plants/pots, fill-out the forms, and that gets passed on to the Card-operators. (CSSA needs Card-Operators, too!)

- If you have not already volunteered, you should go to [cssaconvention.com](http://cssaconvention.com) and click on the **SCHEDULE** link (from list across the top of the site) to see each day’s activities, and you can decide when you want to use your Day-Pass (earned by working a full 4-5 hour shift) to attend the presentations.
- Then use the **link near the bottom of your invitation** to sign into [signup.com](http://signup.com), fill in your name, e-mail and phone, and select the work day/shift/job you want to do at the Convention (invitations were resent awhile ago, plus new ones, as some had been lost).  
**Note: If you lost your invitation, you may go to <https://signup.com/go/EyURfTA> and follow the directions.**
- Be aware that **volunteers get to attend one day of presentations (a Day Pass) for each full 4-5 hour shift** for which they are signed-up (to a maximum of 2 Day-Passes).
- Volunteers are also **invited to attend the first-night Plant Sale on Wednesday** along with the paid attendees. Note: volunteers do not get to eat the snacks, but **DO GET** to purchase great succulents, cacti, and pottery!!

Time is almost up—the **Convention begins very soon, July 17 thru 20, 2019!**

ALSO: Please be aware that some sign-up jobs may need to be shifted depending on daily circumstances, but actual shifts/hours will be maintained in such cases.

Questions? Please contact Ken Byrne at [agaveken@msn.com](mailto:agaveken@msn.com) or 805-406-2674.

## WE NEED BOXES FOR THE CSSA CONVENTION—PLEASE HELP!

The CSSA Convention includes a Plant Sale at the Vets Hall in SLO (801 Grand Ave), and we will need boxes—the same sizes as for our own Show&Sale—not too deep, and not too large to carry with loaded plants.

If you can, please help in one of two ways:

- Bring boxes to our CCCSS Meeting this month, Sunday, July 14, and we will collect them in the OOF parking lot and transport to the Convention
- Bring boxes to the Vets Hall and we will collect them in that parking lot. There will be a sign set up (less than 100-feet from the “Tank”) after 1pm on Tuesday, July 16, and there will be a box-collection next to the newly set-up Tent by noon Wednesday, July 17-20.

As always, newspaper for packing is also appreciated (if you still get a newspaper).

Remember, **volunteers will get to shop at the first evening Pre-Sale**, Wednesday, July 17th, from 7pm through approximately 8:45-9pm. The sale will be open to the public Thursday through Saturday, July 18-20 from 10am-4pm.

Questions? Please contact Ken Byrne at [agaveken@msn.com](mailto:agaveken@msn.com) or 805-406-2674.

Thank you, in advance!



Cactus & Succulent Society of America

**JOIN THE CSSA**

## CLUB BULLETIN BOARD

### 2019/2020 CCCSS MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE PAYABLE NOW

Your CCCSS Membership renewal dues for 2019–2020 are payable at the next club meeting on July 14, 2019. Please see Barbara Brooks at the Membership Table. Dues are payable by cash or check (made out to CCCSS) and are as follows:

**Individual: \$20**

**Family, all under same roof: \$25**

**Business: \$40**

You can also mail your check (payable to CCCSS) to:

**c/o Barbara Brooks**

**441 Marsh St,**

**San Luis Obispo, 93401**

Thank you to those of you who already submitted your annual membership dues. On behalf of the CCCSS Board of Directors, we appreciate our members very much!



### PHOTOS OF 2019 CCCSS ANNUAL SHOW WINNERS ARE ONLINE

CCCSS member **Gene Schroeder** has compiled photos online of all the 2019 Show&Sale winning entries. It's a beautiful display of outstanding specimens, and worth checking out here:

<https://tinyurl.com/CCCSS-Show-2019>

Special thanks also to **Loring Manley** for the beautiful photos, **Ann Erb** for her photo assistance, and **Rob Skillin** for some of the post production work.

### CCCSS MEMBERS' PLANT WISH LIST

Is there a plant you'd like to find but haven't been able to, or do you have a plant or seeds you'd be willing to share? If so, there's a new signup available at our monthly meetings, wherein you can list what you have or what you are looking for, along with your contact info. That list will be published in the monthly newsletter for other members to see. Note that use of this feature authorizes CCCSS to publish your contact info in the newsletter.

*Currently we have the following members still looking for specimens:*

- **Tim Dawson** is looking for an **Aloe castanea (plant or seed)**. Tim can be reached at **805-610-9533**.
- **Margaret Moreno** would like a **Tephrocactus geometricus (plant)**. She can be reached at **805-710-0213**.

Can you help these guys out? If so, give them a call! And remember, if you have something to share, or are looking for something yourself, be sure to sign up at the next meeting! The Wish List will be at one of the back tables.



800+ Facebook members! View club updates & member photos. Also find us online at [www.centralcoastcactus.org](http://www.centralcoastcactus.org).

## GARDEN GATHERING NEWS

**Thank you, Susan and Larry Fishman for hosting a Garden Gathering on Saturday June 15th!**

Susan and Larry had the surprising pleasure of hosting the largest Garden Gathering to date on a gorgeous sunny and warm Saturday June 15th at their 100+ acre farm east of Cayucos. There were 35 attendees who made the drive out to the Fishman working Haas avocado farm near Whale Rock Reservoir.

The almost three-dozen attendees thoroughly enjoyed seeing all aspects of Susan's cactus and succulent obsession! The in-ground landscaped area on the west side of her house featured some extraordinarily large specimens. The plants underscored what Garden Gatherers learned at Maggie Wagner and Markus Mumper's Garden Gathering in early June. Take plants out of containers, give them lots of root room in good soil and the right climate conditions and watch them flourish with fantastic growth. Several blue Pleisocereus were almost 6' tall! Stunning! In addition, there were super-large ferocactus and agaves. Interspersed with the succulents were stunning displays of self-sown blooming California and Mexican poppies.

The angled construction of the farmhouse floor plan provided plenty of space for patios and porches. These provided the additional aspect of creating outdoor rooms and the sensation of wondering what was beyond the next corner of the house. It's a great design principle and one to replicate if you can in your own garden. These "garden rooms" included shelving against warm south facing walls for scores of gorgeous cactus specimens. The sheltered L-shaped patio in front of the main entrance to the house had multiple seating areas surrounded by plant benches at the perfect height for ogling flowering cacti and working on small plant projects.

A short walk from this front yard patio into the pasture, Garden Gatherers were treated to more specimen plants. On a very long plant bench, covered with shade cloth, was quite a large collection of cacti and other potted succulents. Susan has an extensive collection of unusual specimens including many plants she has brought from Arizona and Texas!

After participation in many Garden Gatherings, we've noticed a common theme among many cactus and succulent gardeners: many also seem to be animal lovers! Susan and Larry Fishman were no exception. Their menagerie includes 3 dogs, a cat and multiple varieties of egg-laying birds. The Fishman fowl include chickens, Guinea fowl, and even a rooster allowed to stick around because of his pleasant personality! Susan is a gifted artist and has painted amazing, personable portraits of each of the farm dogs who have lived at their farm. Each portrait is a mini masterpiece! Susan seems to have perfectly captured the spirit of each dog's soul.

**Thank you, Susan and Larry, for sharing your very interesting and unusual Garden Farmstead with our Club members.** They had such a wonderful time that the event lasted almost twice as long as the typical Garden Gathering!

There are currently no Garden Gatherings scheduled for the rest of the year. ***We are recruiting Garden Gathering Hosts for September through November of 2019!*** Let us know if you would like to host an event!

See next page for more info on Garden Gatherings >>>



Photos are from the Fishmans' Garden Gathering in June.



## GARDEN GATHERING NEWS – CONTINUED



### New to CCCSS?

#### Here are the FAQs about Garden Gatherings:

- **What:** “Garden Gatherings” are a chance to meet club members in a fun, casual garden setting. Conversation, food, and a tour of the member’s garden are the focus of the events.
- **Why:** CCCSS club is large and growing; it’s hard to connect with other cactophiles at our huge meetings.
- **Where:** Gatherings are held in a CCCSS member’s garden.
- **Who:** Participants must be CCCSS members. The host decides the number of guests.
- **When:** Hosts pick the date and time for the event. Events average 1 to 1½ hours.
- **Help:** Event planning, organization, sign-up, and email coordination with your guests is capably managed by Susan and Kathie!

Please let us know if you are interested!

**Susan Ross:** [susanrosscra@yahoo.com](mailto:susanrosscra@yahoo.com)

**Kathie Matsuyama:** [luvbigdogs@earthlink.net](mailto:luvbigdogs@earthlink.net)

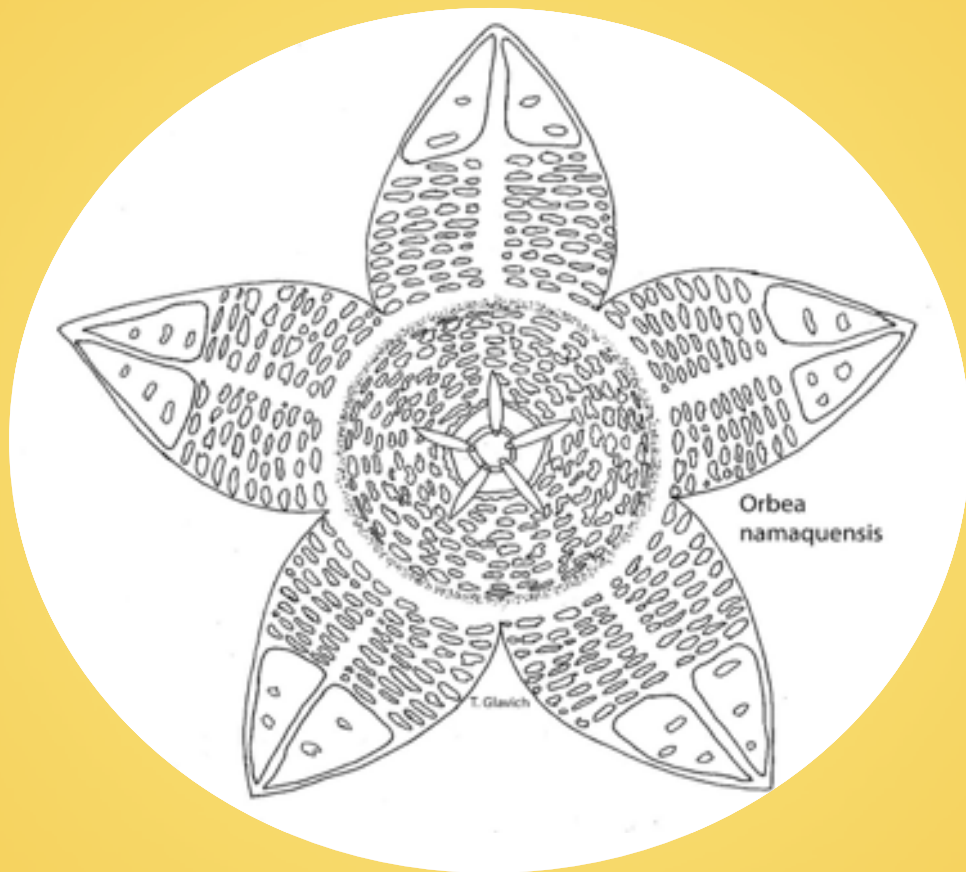


More photos from the Fishmans’  
Garden Gathering in June.

At right, Paul Matsuyama  
relaxes on the patio.



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# JUNE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Past President Ken Byrne called the meeting to order at 2 pm on June 9, 2019 and welcomed approximately 125 members and guests to the meeting.

Ken thanked the club members who bought refreshments or helped clean up at the previous meeting. They received a customary free plant as a thank you. Volunteers are always needed for refreshments and clean-up. The sign-up sheets are located at the back of the room during the meeting.

Ken also thanked all the other club members who volunteer at each meeting and invited everyone to explore the different club tables around the meeting room during the break. He then welcomed first-time visitors and invited them to introduce themselves and select a complimentary plant as a welcome.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Barbara Brooks: See her at the back table to renew your membership. She also mentioned that name tags for new members are at the back table.
2. Show and Sale (Rob Skillin): The Show and Sale was a great success again this year. Of the 462 entries, 70 were rookies. Awards will be presented at the July meeting. He also thanked the S&S Planning Committee—who started planning in February—for all of their hard work. Rob then thanked specific members who went above and beyond:
  - Pat Gilson was in charge of organizing all the volunteers and tracking their hours. She also oversaw arrangements for food for the volunteers and ordering all the tables that are needed for the Show & Sale.
  - Bill Findley, in charge of the T-Shirts and Live Auction.
  - Kathy Goss oversaw the financial aspects of the S&S.
  - Loring Manley came in early to take beautiful photos of all the winning plants.
  - Ken Byrne, in charge of setup and breakdown.
  - All other members of the committee that helped wherever needed.
  - All volunteers, i.e. clerks, pre-sale, cashiers etc.
3. Pat has reward raffle tickets (10 for every hour worked) all volunteers at the back table.
4. Huntington Show (Rob Skillin): The annual CSSA Show and Sale will be held at Huntington on June 28th and 29th.
5. Garden Gatherings (Kathie Matsuyama/Susan Ross): Next event is at Susan Fishburn's Garden in Cayucos.
6. Upcoming CSSA Convention (Ken Byrne): Convention is July 17–20 at the SLO Vets Hall. We still need volunteer cashiers and boxes for the convention. Bring boxes to the July meeting or to the Vets Hall Wednesday through Saturday mornings. Only volunteers can attend the Wednesday evening presale. The sale is open to the public Thursday/Friday, 10am–4pm, and Saturday, 10am–3pm.
7. Wish List (Ken Byrne): There's a Wish List sign-up sheet at meetings. These will be published in the Newsletter.

## BRAG PLANTS AND RAFFLE TABLE

Rob thanked everyone that brought a brag plant and invited them to come forward to talk about them. He then described some of the extra special plants on the raffle table.

## PROGRAM

Karen Zimmerman (Huntington Botanical Garden) presented a very informative program called "Aloes On My Mind: Exploring Aloe Hybrids, One Generation At A Time".

After that came the plant-opportunity/raffle and plant exchange.

Meeting was adjourned at 4pm

Submitted by: Ann L. Byrne, CCCSS Secretary

## NEW BOOK PRESALE

### Secrets of Namaqualand Succulents

By Florent Grenier, with a foreword by Steven Hammer

*Secrets of Namaqualand Succulents* is a blend of remarkable photography (1126 photos, 710 species, 352 pages) and natural history, giving a plethora of anecdotes on desert plant habitats, strategies of survival and reproduction/pollination, some of which being exclusive as stemming from yet-unpublished research. This book is the result of five years of restless fieldwork and research in the most remote corners of Namaqualand. Some yet undescribed species are also presented.

Currently available for sale for 39 € on [www.namaqualand-succulents.com](http://www.namaqualand-succulents.com). For book lovers, there is also a special Collector's Edition with a hand-made slipcase (deadline: July 10th!).

Amongst the popular succulent genera illustrated in the book: Adromischus, Aloe, Anacampseros, Bulbine, Cheiridopsis, Conophytum, Crassula, Euphorbia, Othonna, Senecio, Monsonia (Sarcocaulon), Tylecodon and many others. Amongst the popular geophytic genera: Babiana, Eriospermum, Ferraria, Gladiolus, Lachenalia, Massonia, Moraea, Ornithogalum, Oxalis, Pelargonium and many others.

Specifications: 352 pages, Hard Cover, 24cm x 17cm, 1126 exclusive photographs, 40,000 words and over 710 succulent and geophytic species illustrated. A large Namaqualand map and photograph poster is included (60cm x 40cm). Very special care was taken to provide the best quality printing possible. The high-quality sewn binding enables a perfect opening and handling, and longevity of the book.

NOTE: The presale only lasts until July 15th. A Special Collector's Edition is available for you to have your name written in all copies of the book, which also includes a hand-made slipcase and the signature & dedication from the author. This Collector's Edition is only available until July the 10th!

Check the website link above for more information or to make a purchase.



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800+ Facebook members! View club updates & member photos.  
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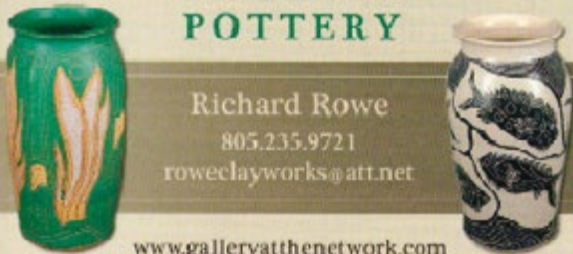


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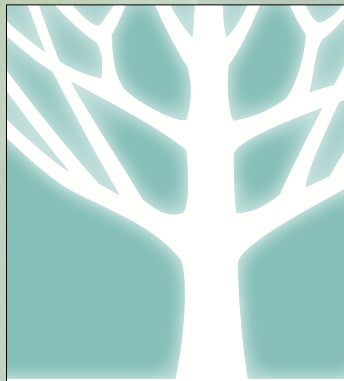
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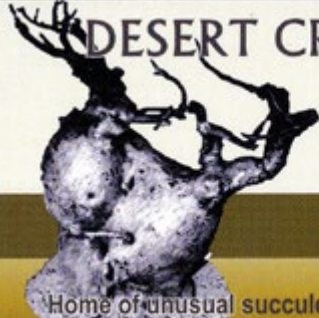
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