



ON THE DRY SIDE

The next meeting is September 12th beginning at 2:00 online with Zoom. Watch for the e-mail.

If you missed Ernesto's talk about soil pH last month at our August meeting, check it out here: <https://youtu.be/8TX7a17yqBw>

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Through the Looking Glass at Aloes in Wonderland by Jeff Chemnick

Brief Description: A virtual tour of Santa Barbara's rare plant garden/nursery, Aloes in Wonderland. Join Jeff for a virtual tour of the greatest hits at Aloes in Wonderland. Though his life's botanical passion has been the cycads, the name "Aloes in Wonderland" came to him in a dream some 15 years ago and changed the course of the garden's focus. Jeff will share images and stories about the horticultural highlights through the course of a year.



Jeff Chemnick, a research associate at GannaWalska Lotusland in Santa Barbara, is an authority on Mexican cycads having published numerous articles and described several species new to science in conjunction with Berkeley Botanic Garden's own Tim Gregory. In addition to his field research on the cycads of Mexico, he leads botanical and ornithological ecotours throughout the country with focus on the state of Oaxaca. Currently Jeff is co-authoring a book on the cycads of Mexico (along with Tim Gregory) which is due to be published in 2022. He is on the IUCN's Cycad Specialist Group which determines the status of endangered species. Jeff has considerable horticultural experience as owner and operator of Aloes in Wonderland, a specialty nursery in Santa Barbara, California where he has lived since 1981.

A former president of the Santa Barbara Horticulture Society and former chair of the Horticultural Society Annual Plant Sale, Jeff has been involved for years within the botanical/horticultural community of Santa Barbara. He has given numerous slide presentations on his botanical travels worldwide and teaches the Lotusland docent training course on cycads.

SPEAKER OF THE MONTH – Continued



Jeff's garden and nursery occupies nearly 4.5 acres at his residence in the Santa Barbara foothills. Though he lost his home in the Tea Fire in 2008, the fire-resistant garden he planted years ago, consisting chiefly of cycads, aloes, cactus, and agaves, has made a remarkable comeback.

In March, 2013, Jeff organized an Aloe Summit which took place in Santa Barbara. A weekend-long event, the Aloe Summit featured a day of presentations at Lotusland, a day of garden tours, a plant sale and auction, and several wonderful dinners, parties, and social gatherings.

Jeff's passions include tropical traveling, birding, surfing, skiing, word games, and playing music.

Aloes in Wonderland

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PLANT OF THE MONTH

Trichodiadema

The genus *Trichodiadema* is a member of the Aizoaceae family. Some members of this large and diverse family include *Aloinopsis*, *Conophytum*, *Delosperma*, *Lithops*, *Mesembryanthemum*, *Nananthus*, *Rabia* and *Titanopsis*.



T. introrsum

Just looking at a few of the plants in these genera reveals a few things about *Trichodiadema*:

First, they do not grow very tall. The maximum height for the largest *Trichodiadema* species is 12 inches, most are in the 3- to 6-inch range.

Second, these plants grow low to the ground and spread out. The largest *Trichodiadema* species have maximum diameters up to 12 inches when fully grown. Most are half that size.

For the home brewers and cooks in the crowd, this plant group is for you. Roots of some species of *Trichodiadema* have been used in the past to speed the fermentation of bread, beer, etc. The roots contain yeast(?) or sugars(?) that increase the rate of fermentation.

The name *Trichodiadema* comes from the ancient Greek "*trikhos*," meaning hair or bristle, and "*diadema*," meaning crown. The genus is comprised of around 30 species

By looking at where these plant grow we know that high heat, bright sun and sparse rainfall are the norm. We also know that in order for them to survive water is stored in the roots – creating a good-looking caudex.

Trichodiadema bulbosum grows in the western and eastern cape regions of South Africa. In 1814 this plant was given the name *Mesembryanthemum bulbosum* by Adrian Hardy Haworth. It was given the name *Trichodiadema bulbosum* by Martin Heinrich Gustav Schwantes in 1926. This is the currently accepted name.

T. bulbosum is one of the larger plants in the genus. The leaves are many but small with each leaf about one-eighth inch wide and no more than one-half inch long. The leaves have a light waxy coating. For these plants, water conservation is key to survival in their habitat. This plant has attractive flowers that range from violet to purple red with a yellow center. In comparison to the size of the leaves the flowers are very large. Flowers can be from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches in diameter. Even if you don't want to grow *T. bulbosum* for the caudex grow it for the flowers. Another plus: This plant will flower from late spring to early fall.

PLANT OF THE MONTH - Continued

It is fairly easy to find these plants for sale on the Web. You may also find them at your local Walmart under the common name of "ice plant."

Trichodiadema bulbosum is a popular bonsai plant among bonsai enthusiasts. Over time, the caudex will expand to the diameter of the plant. This means if I do everything right, and the plant likes me, I could have a twisted, knotty caudex in the 8- to 12-inch-diameter range.

Care for the plant should reflect the basic care practices for other plants found in the hot and dry regions of Western Africa. The soil mix should drain well and contain some grit. Care information from some sources suggest that a soil mix with a small amount – no more than 10 percent – of organic matter works best.

T. bulbosum should be watered well during the growing season. Every source said to not let the soil mix dry out during this period. The plant can tolerate high heat and bright, direct sunlight. Some sources said better growth can be attained by giving the plant direct morning and afternoon sun, but bright indirect sun during the heat of the day. I am not sure how you do that. This plant can take a light frost, but is not cold-hardy.

It is fairly easy to find these plants for sale on the Web. You may also find them at your local Walmart under the common name of "ice plant."

By Bob Williams (March 2018)



T. bulbosum



T. densum



T. densum

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CCCSS meetings summary August 8 2021



Regular Meeting

Present: 70 in person, 19 YouTube streaming

- Announcements (Harry)
 - Greetings to participants in person & on YouTube streaming
 - Thanks to all the volunteers at their various tables around the meeting room.
 - Ann Erb needs one more clerk & 2 alternates for the Show & Sale judging. Please see her if interested.
 - Free plants given to refreshment providers & last month's clean-up crew
 - Free plants to first-time meeting attendees (2)
 - Mike Bush reminded attendees about Plant sale/Pottery sale in Los Osos on August 27 & 28.
 - Rob Skillin thanked everyone who attended his Open House event.
 - Re; the S&S, Rob encouraged attendees to "Bring your favorite plant to exhibit at the Show".
 - Show categories and entry levels were reviewed including a description of an educational display. CSSA provides a plaque for the winner in this category.
 - Rob discussed & showed on screen a number of the brag plants and Ariocarpus (POM) that were brought by attendees.
- Bill Findley announced that Natasha Erickson had the only entry in the design contest for the t-shirt for the Show & Sale. It was a beautiful Dioscorea elaphantipes. A vote was called and the majority of members voted in favor. Congratulations Natasha!
- Ernesto Sandoval presentation: As usual Ernesto gave a lively presentation about a complex topic in very understandable terms. His presentation covered acidification and fertilization. Here are a few tips from the talk:
 - The more oxygen you give your plant's roots, the happier they will be. This is why we amend our planting mix with materials that help loosen the soil (i.e. pumice, perlite).
 - The water you give your plants should be at a pH below 7 (5.5-6.5). Test your water---don't just "wing it".
 - According to Ernesto, correcting your water's pH "Really, really helps". You will see positive results within weeks.
 - Less is more when it comes to adding nutrients & fertilizers. Suggestion: Use ¼ strength commercial fertilizer with each watering or fertilize every 3rd watering.
 - A note about root health: Plastic pots in the sun, can cook your plants roots.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Continued



- Loring Manley gave a presentation on the system he uses to water/fertilize his plants. He was getting so many plants that to balance the pH and fertilizer in a myriad of watering cans just got to be too much (Sound familiar?).
 - He uses a system that places a Dosatron (which contains the acid/fertilizer solutions) in line with a hose. This way he can water with the hose and the water coming out contains the correct mix of acid (to correct pH) and fertilizer.
 - Note: This system is for watering plants only. Not for drinking, ponds or pets.
 - Contact Loring if you have questions about this system.

The opportunity table was next & then the exchange table. Thanks everyone for attending!

BOD meeting:

- Treasurer's report: CGCI dues paid, website updated & webmaster paid. Ordering more "square chip readers" for S&S checkout.
- Tanya Luthin discussed using Google Docs to store Club documents. A tutorial has been sent out to BOD members to familiarize them with the software. The plan is to have documents in one secure place so that they can be kept up to date. BOD approved a motion to utilize this platform to store CCCSS documents.
- BOD approved the color blue for the S&S t-shirt.
- Covid update: As of this moment it should be OK for us to hold indoor meetings and have the Show & Sale. Mask wearing will be necessary. The Board will look into ventilation at the Ludwick Center. The Board will also keep abreast of local case positivity and Public Health guidelines.
- Reis Mortuary parking: After having an initial green light to use their parking lot, the last two meetings they have had services during our meeting time. Harry has tried contacting them to improve the communication re: lot availability, but has not gotten a response. He will try again before our meeting in September. Luckily parking has not been a problem because of decreased attendance at the meetings.
- Community Foundation parking lot: They have about 6 spaces available & Karen will talk with them about being able to use these spots.
- Mid-State Fair: Mary Harlow & Linda Hicks spent 2 hours at the Fair on July 31. We had a table set up to do a potting demo and had handouts regarding plant care and CCCSS. We mostly chatted with people walking through the Floriculture building. People were very interested in talking about succulent plants. Maybe next year we can get a time slot listed in the Fair schedule, so that people will know that there will be a formal presentation on succulent plants.

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Continued



- The YouTube streaming went well during the regular meeting. Will continue to use this format for folks who want to attend the meeting from home.
- Laura Oliver reported that we have 98 paid memberships 2021/22.
- Pat Gilson reported that she got 10 new volunteers for the S&S. She also said that she would be training Laura to help her with volunteer management.
- Claudette reported that refreshments went well today.
- There was discussion about the Exchange Table. Harry will talk about how the Exchange Table works at the beginning of the next regular meeting.
-

Show & Sale committee meeting August 23, 2021

The S&S committee met with the BOD and there was discussion regarding whether or not to cancel this year's event. After much earnest discussion & with great reluctance it was decided to postpone the S&S until Spring 2022.

Submitted by Mary Harlow, Secretary



ANNOUNCEMENTS - Continued

President's Message



In July all the data points suggested that returning to in person meetings seemed to make sense. Vaccinations were rising, schools were set to open, virus fears were abating. We returned to meeting in person again and the Show & Sale (S&S) committee was working on the numerous details required to put on the event. The emergence of the Delta variant changed everything.

On August 23rd the S&S committee in conjunction with the Board of Directors voted to postpone the S&S and suspend in person meetings at the Odd Fellows Hall. The consensus was that large groups of people meeting indoors was inappropriate at this time. This decision was made with great reluctance and disappointment.

Not to be defeated, the S&S committee immediately began to explore new ideas and possible venues to have a Covid-safe event next Spring. An outdoor, fenced area with benches and shade would be ideal. It does not cost anything to reserve or cancel the Ludwick Center, so we will reserve it again for May 2022.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, September 12th at 2pm on Zoom. Fortunately for us we all know how to Zoom now! You will receive your invitation to join the meeting as it gets closer. At present Bill Findley is working on enlisting a speaker for the presentation portion of the meeting.

Our popular plant giveaway will resume with Gene Schroeder and Karen Kolba helping. The plant pick up will be on September 19th from 1-2:30pm. Mary Peracca will be setting up as our vendor to sell her pottery. A portion of sales will be donated to the Club. Hopefully we will also have our new 2021 t-shirts available for sale.

Masks will be required. We want people to be able to socialize but please be mindful of social distancing.

Stay safe, keep healthy and we will continue to reinvent our activities as conditions require. See you on Zoom September 12th and at the plant pick up Sept 19.

Harry



CCCSS ASK US: WE WILL TRY TO HELP!!

Do you have a prickly cactus question or an inscrutable succulent issue? The CCCSS ASK ME TABLE can now be accessed VIRTUALLY. Send your questions to our venerable expert **Cactophile Gene Schroeder** and **Succulentophile Kathie Matsuyama**. Due to the overwhelming number of ASK ME requests, you must be an Active Member of CCCSS to participate.

Examples of issues we may be able to help with include:

- ID of Plants

Provide 3 photos of the plant: 1) close-up of leaves, flowers, spines; 2) general photo of the plant with something in the photo that indicates scale....a ruler, soda can or credit card; and 3) a photo of the plant in its environment (is the plant in full sun, under a porch, planted in the landscape?)

- Watering & Light Requirements
- Feeding & Fertilization
- Pests & Problems
- Soil & Amendments
- Propagation

Please email good photos of your plant. Also provide all the background information you think necessary to help us answer your question. Tell us which city you live in; microclimates in our region provide vastly different growing conditions. We will email you with our thoughts. Your plant question might be featured in a future CCCSS ASK US Newsletter column.

Don't forget to renew your CCCSS membership today. And send your ASK ME questions to Gene Schroeder and Kathie Matsuyama at: AskMe@centralcoastcactus.org

Happy Growing!



Echinopsis



Agave attenuata 'Variegata'



Ferocactus emoryi ssp. rectispinus

ANNOUNCEMENTS - Continued

Open Studios is Coming

We would like to announce our (Ben Trogdon and myself) participation in Open Studios. Of course this is assuming it is allowed to go forward - but we haven't heard anything regarding cancellation at this point.

Ben Trogdon and Maggie Wagner have collaborated to form Pacific Sun Ceramics and Succulents, specializing in our favorite plants and, of course, pottery. At the time of this writing we are planning to participate in the first weekend of the Open Studios art tour. It will be a completely outdoor event at the home of Ben Trogdon and his wife Robin Shroyer. We will have lots of planters available in addition to plants and Ben's beautiful functional pottery.

- Please, vaccinated guests only
- Face coverings required for entering the greenhouse
- First weekend only - October 9th & 10th
- 10 AM to 5 PM
- Subject to cancellation
- Please check our website for cancellation information:
www.pscs.us
- 273 Blue Sky Drive Arroyo Grande



ANNOUNCEMENTS - Continued

Pottery Sale

Mary Peracca will be the vendor selling her ceramic planters on the plant pick up day, Sunday Sept. 19th., from 1:00-2:30.

Here are some photos of the new pots she has been making. They are all hand built meaning they are made from a slab of clay. They all have interesting textures and designs. Your plants will love growing in one of her pots! She can accept cash, check or credit card. Please bring your own box.



ANNOUNCEMENTS - Continued



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Garden: Open during daylight hours
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Garden Founder Walk and Talk

Walk and talk with Eve Vigil in the Botanical Garden each month on the first Wednesday from 11 AM to 12 PM.

Subjects may touch on the Garden's history, what's in bloom, important maintenance – when and why – or whatever interests the group. Have you ever wondered how the garden beds were initially prepared, what the irrigation schedule is or pretty much anything about any of the plants? Well, come on out and ask Eve! Meet new people and learn great tips and tricks for having a stunning water-frugal garden.

Free garden tour with paid admission to the Garden. Free for members. No need to RSVP, just show up and enjoy!



The Amapolla Tree, Shaving Brush Tree (*Pseudobombax ellipticum*)



“A perennial plant that lives in an arid, semiarid, or seasonally arid environment and is therefore adapted to storing water in leaves, stems and /or roots in order to survive prolonged periods of drought, has one or a few woody trunks, and can attain a height of at least 2 meters.” Dan Mahr



I had no idea that I was buying a tree. I liked that it had a bulb-like caudex, and lobey like leaves that started redish, then turned green.

It was in a 6” pot. In the six years I have had it, it has grown to 5 1/2’ yikes, its base twice the size of the top.

This is the first year it bloomed and what a surprise to see the banana like flower bulbs peel like bananas and pop out the brush like flower. Pretty cool!!

Sadly, the flowers didn't last for many days, but since there were so many bulbs, I enjoyed the blooming for a couple of weeks..

On our last CSSA zoom meeting, Dan Mahr's talk was about succulent trees. And there I learned about my tree, about succulent trees!! These trees range from Mexico to Argentina, and will grow huge. They can become an amazing bonsai as their caudexs and flowers make for a unique show plant.

This fall I plan on working on the bonsai effect!



BRAG PLANTS

Submitted by Bill Findley

Cereus peruvianus monstrose

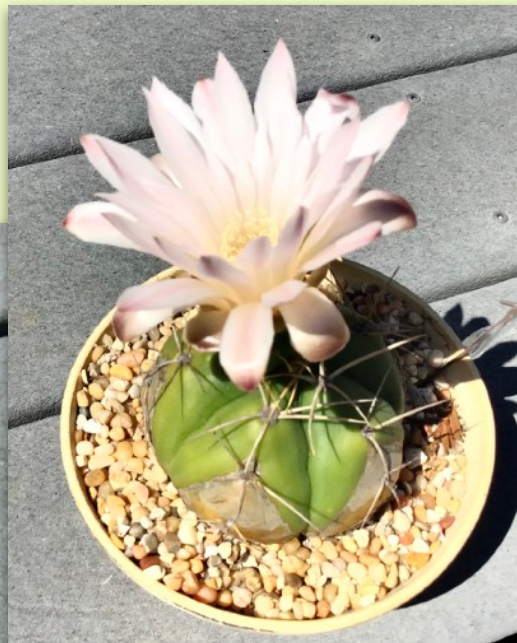


Ceraria namaquensis AKA *Portulacaria namaquensis*
- a super rare plant

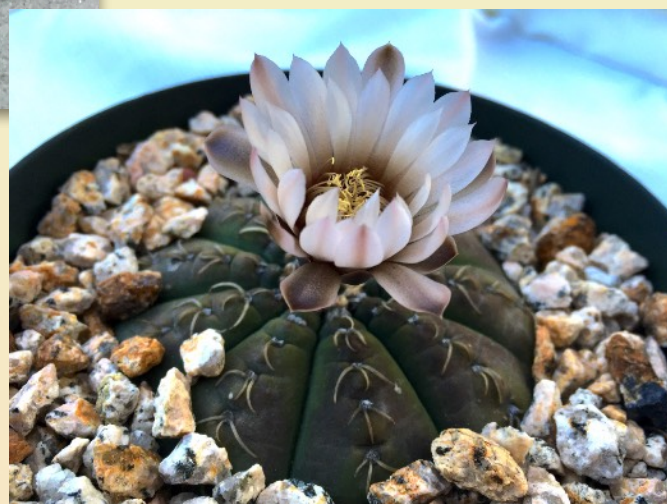


BRAG PLANTS - Continued

Submitted by C. Mortensen



Gymnocalcium horstii



Please, I need an ID



From Paul Fountain's yard

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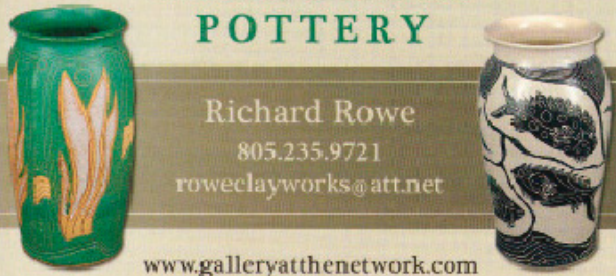
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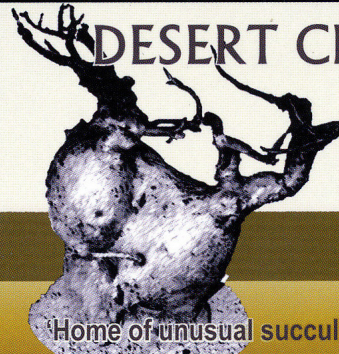
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