

# CACTUS CORNER NEWS

## Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

[www.fresnocss.com](http://www.fresnocss.com) (new website)

Vol. 33, no. 12

Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

December 2015

## HOLIDAY PARTY POTLUCK

Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Service Center  
5340 North Fresno Street, Fresno

Set-up: 5:30 pm ~ 6:30 pm

Appetizers & Socialization: 6:30 pm ~ 7:00 pm

Dinner: 7:00 pm



*Ferocactus cylindraceus*

The club will supply Tri-tip, chicken, coffee and water, and table service. Doris Hooten, as in the past years, has generously donated a large baked ham. You provide your favorite potluck recipe: appetizer, salad, main dish, vegetable or dessert. (Non-alcoholic beverages only)

**SILENT AUCTION:** Please bring plants and/or plant-related items; pots, books, gardening magazines, jewelry or whatever you think our members might bid on.

### INSTALLATION OF NEW OFFICERS:

President: (re-elected) Sue Haffner

Vice President: (re-elected) Rosanna Rojas

Treasurer: (re-elected) Robert Scott

Secretary: (re-elected) Cindy Duwe

Affiliate Representative: (re-elected) Fred Gaumer

Board members: Ann Bierbower (re-elected), Tom Meyer (re-elected), Karen Willoughby (new)  
Continuing Board Members: Mary Drumheller, Polly Dunklin, Carol Grosch, terms expire  
December 31, 2016:



**YOUR OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS WISH YOU ALL A MERRY  
HOLIDAY SEASON AND A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!**

**FROM THE PREZ ... Hi, all,**

Here we are in December—the end of another year. Hard to believe, isn't it? I still have a lot of plants sitting out, getting some sun, happy to have been rained on. But now I have to get them stashed away before the near-freezing weather gets here in a few days. It seems like I always have to get this sort of thing done in a big hurry every year. I hope you are better organized than I am!

Our program this month is our annual Holiday Party Potluck. We always have a lot of delicious food and a lot of fun, so I hope you all can attend. If you don't recall what you signed up to bring, give Polly Dunklin a call (266-9143 or 433-7693). If you didn't get a chance to sign up, you can just bring your favorite potluck dish. Don't forget to include a serving spoon or other implement. If you would like to help set up, we will begin at 5:30.

As usual, we will have a silent auction. Donations are welcome—plant-related, generally: plants, pots, books, decorative items, etc. Come prepared to bid on the donations, as well. It's always fun to see what's there. If you have any questions, get in touch with me.

As the year comes to an end, it's time to thank our officers and chairpersons for all their efforts. They are busy people—they actually have lives!—but they were conscientious in their service to the club. Rosanna Rojas arranged the monthly programs and was the liaison with the speakers. Rob Scott carried out the Treasurer's duties. Cindy Duwe served as Secretary and also as Show Chairman; she also arranged the fall bus trip, with assistance from Polly Dunklin. We couldn't function without Brag Table honcho and Affiliate Representative Fred Gaumer, and board members Carole Grosch, Ann Bierbower, Tom Meyer, Rudy Rulloda, Mary Drumheller and Polly Dunklin.

Others who deserve praise: Madeleine Mitchell (library); Paul Mitchell (plant opportunity table); Mary Ann Villegas (newsletter and club photographer); Vickie Veen (webmaster); Marian Orvis (refreshments wrangler); Mary Drumheller (workshops); and Karen Willoughby (Facebook coordinator). Many thanks, also, to those of you who help set up and clear the room every month.

As always, a million thanks to Doris Hooton and Tom Meyer for hosting the board meetings and workshops, not to mention the annual picnic. We are lucky to have them as such a generous resource!

We are fortunate, also, to have access to the great meeting room at the DHHSC. Many thanks to them and to Susan Coulter, Program Manager.

Last of all, I want to thank all of you for your enthusiasm and support. I've said it before, but I'll say it again: you are a great group.

See you at the party, *Sue*

**A NEW HONOR FOR PAUL MITCHELL:** On November 12<sup>th</sup>, Paul Mitchell received a "Spirit of Philanthropy" award from the California Valley Chapter of Fundraising Professionals. November 12<sup>th</sup> is National Philanthropy Day, which recognizes the dedication and generosity of those who work to make the world a better place. Paul was nominated by the Discovery Center, where he has volunteered for more than twenty years, putting in approximately 8,000 hours in the cactus gardens. Congratulations, Paul! [www.afpcavalley.afpnet.org](http://www.afpcavalley.afpnet.org)



**Club access:** President, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, [sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu); Programs, Rosanna Rojas, 999-0017, [rrojas96@gmail.com](mailto:rrojas96@gmail.com); Treasurer, Robert Scott, 960-3665, [Rob\\_scott85@yahoo.com](mailto:Rob_scott85@yahoo.com); Editor, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, [sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu); Refreshments, Marian Orvis, 226-0145, [mforvet@comcast.net](mailto:mforvet@comcast.net); Librarian, Madeleine Mitchell, 638-2784, [madeleine43@comcast.net](mailto:madeleine43@comcast.net); Webmaster, Vickie Veen, [vickieveen@gmail.com](mailto:vickieveen@gmail.com); Sunshine, Carole Grosch, 323-8602, [cgg266@comcast.net](mailto:cgg266@comcast.net)



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:**

Heather Bogosian-Franks (2<sup>nd</sup>);  
 Doris Hooton (8<sup>th</sup>); Jennifer Little  
 (14<sup>th</sup>); Ruth Saludes (17<sup>th</sup>);  
 Doris Gravelle (22<sup>nd</sup>).

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**SAY HELLO TO THIS NEW MEMBER:**

Debby McCann, Fresno

WELCOME

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**The Felix Gillet Institute** is an organization dedicated to locating, identifying and propagating the “lost fruit of the Sierra Nevada.” They survey abandoned and relict farms and orchards that date back to the gold rush years looking for the fruit that still survives. It is named for Felix Gillet, of Nevada City CA, who imported, bred and introduced hundreds of varieties of fruit, grapes and nuts into California and the Northwest. Many of these, long thought lost, have been re-discovered by members of the Institute. These 125+ year survivors show great hardiness and insect and disease resistance. [www.felixgillet.org](http://www.felixgillet.org)

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**JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS!!**



If you don't know what to buy for your favorite succulentophile, take a gander at these fabulous colorful echeverias. Who wouldn't want a set of these amazing creations, one in each

color, some of them sprinkled with glitter. How festive!

Just when you think you've seen everything—cacti festooned with strawflowers, mammillarias in Day-glo colors—here's the latest from the big time distributors.

The guy who thought this up sure won his Christmas bonus!

(Photo by Ray Stephenson, *Cactus World*, June 2014)

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Fresno Home & Garden Show**, March 4-6, 2016,  
 Fresno Fairgrounds.

**Water-Wise Gardening Event**, Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>,  
 CSUF Ornamental Horticulture Unit,  
 Barstow & Chestnut Avenues, 8 a.m. to noon.

**FC&SS Annual Show & Sale**, June 4-5,  
 Sierra Vista Mall, Clovis.

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**DROUGHT HURTS JOSHUA TREES**



Photo by Ruairi Cassidy

An article in the Los Angeles *Times* relates how Joshua Tree seedlings are shriveling up and dying before they have time to put down strong roots. They quote UC Riverside ecologist Cameron Barrows to the effect that the ongoing drought has hastened the decline of the species in the Joshua Tree National Monument. Scientists predict the trees will lose 90% of their range in the park by the end of the century if dry conditions continue.

Recent reports, though, indicate that this year's El Niño looks to be the strongest in many years. The only question is just where in California the rains will come. El Niños tend to arrive in January and are active into March. December can even be somewhat dry in an El Niño year. Let's keep our fingers crossed and hope especially for Sierra snow.

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**NO BOARD MEETING IN DECEMBER**



**NOVEMBER BRAG TABLE:** Chairman Fred Gaumer displayed *Fenestraria rhopallophylla aurantiaca* and a selection of *Gymnocalycium pflanzii* forms that he had gotten from Larry Homan; Larry Carlberg brought the rock garden growing in a piece of feather rock; he's been working on this for awhile; Jack Fleming brought *Euphorbia* 'Wang hybrid'; Madeleine Mitchell displayed *Haworthia truncata* 'Lime Green'; Bill Gale showed a tillandsia and *Notocactus scopæ*; Bruce Hargreaves brought *Aloe arborescens* and an issue of *Bradleya*, the annual publication of the British C&S Society; Jack Loughmiller displayed *Mammillaria elongata*; and Eddie Etheridge showed *Pachypodium namaquanum*. Many thanks to all of them.



**NOVEMBER WORKSHOP:** Attendees looked at plants in genera starting with O, P and Q. We looked at *Opuntia*, *Ortegocactus*, *Othonna*, *Orbea* and *Obregonia*. Dennis Anderson brought an OSH gymnocalycium, a genus he recently discovered. We also looked at *Pachypodium* and *Pelargonium*. No one brought a Q plant, mainly because there are hardly any. The only Q cactus is *Quiabentia* (2 species), a South American genus that bears some resemblance to *Pereskia*: woody stems, long spines, big leaves. The only Q succulent is *Quaqua*, a genus of stapeliads with a number of species in South Africa, characterized by sharp-angled stems and small flowers. Besides Dennis, others bringing plants to show were Mary Drumheller, Bill Gale, Veone Gale, Sue Haffner, Gale Blank, Jack Fleming, Ann Bierbower, Tom Meyer and Eddie Etheridge.

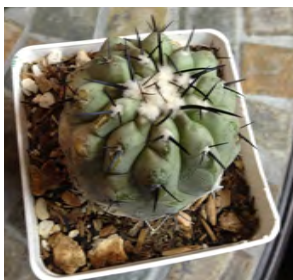


Photo: Cactus Art Biz



Winterizing was the discussion topic. Tom said that his greenhouse, heated by natural gas, is closed up. Eddie has an electric heater for his plants. Jack uses a ceramic disc heater and said he planned to get plastic put up this weekend. Ann said she had invested in an additional small plastic greenhouse. Bill uses a propane heater and a fan. Sue, Polly Dunklin and Jack Loughmiller described how they moved plants and protected them from cold temperatures. Dan Gale, whose birthday it was that day, brought presents for others: small plants of a special adenium. Thanks, Dan!

The December workshop (Dec. 16, 6 p.m., at 3733 N. Sierra Vista) will look at R, S and T. Discussion topic will be growing inside (windowsill gardening).

All club members are welcome.



### CREMNOPHITES: LIFE ON THE EDGE

Cremnophites are plants that have adapted to life on cliff faces. The word comes from Greek *cremno*=cliff and *phuton*=plant. South African plantsman Ernst van Jaarsveld has spent the last dozen plus years exploring the high cliffs of southern Africa, observing the flora there and how it survives in such difficult environments.

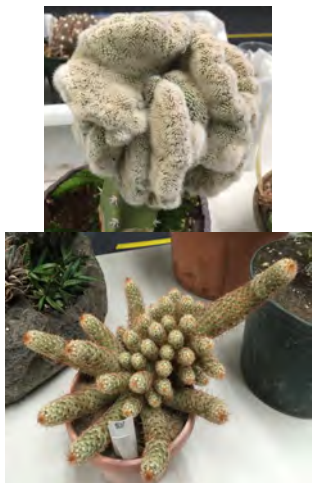
Cliffs remain one of the last pristine, little explored habitats on earth. "Water run-off is extreme, resulting in a dry habitat which suits succulents, and we find some succulents growing opportunistically on cliffs, but many have developed special adaptations enabling them to grow only in this type of habitat."

In most habitats natural forces shape the plants that live there. On a cliff, the primary force is the vertical orientation—the cliff with its high water run-off and strong exposure to light. Cremnophites surrender to gravity with leaves that hang down the rock face, rooting when parts touch the substrate. "The cliff albuca *Albuca cremnophila* and cliff bulbine

*Bulbine cremnophila* have leaves that hang downwards, and the cliff ox-tongue *Gasteria rawlinsonii* (pictured left) has clusters of long hanging leafy stems, whereas the Kaoko aloe *Aloe corallina* and Hardy's aloe *A. hardyi* have pendent rosettes of mitriform leaves (leaves drawn together like a bishop's mitre) ... Why the tendency to droop? On vertical cliffs, plants have to make the most of the available light and consequently their leaves and stems grow laterally or outward, away from the cliff. However, supporting succulent branches on horizontal growth places a weight burden on the plants, resulting in a drooping growth form. In many cliff species this is genetically fixed but other opportunistic cliff plants may take on a pendent form, but will change to an erect habit when grown under normal conditions."

Van Jaarsveld has found that many of the plants found in these inaccessible locations have relaxed the defenses that characterize their lowland relatives. *Gasterias* that normally scramble through thickets on the ground are spotted or otherwise camouflaged against herbivores, while those on the cliffs, not bothered by browsers, have reduced spots and other markings. Aloes that are heavily armed with teeth on the ground are relatively toothless up on the cliffs. The vertical aloes also seem to lack the bitter taste found in those on the ground.

Additional pictures from the Brag Table:

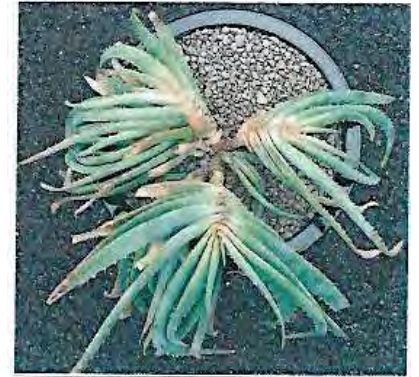




### ALOE HARDYI

This is one of the cliff dwelling plants that van Jaarsveld has described as having the tendency to sprawl or hang genetically fixed. The picture at the left shows a plant of *A. hardyi* growing in a pot in England from a cutting taken from a plant in South Africa. As you can see, it is already exhibits the sprawling habit.

This is an immature specimen with leaves growing in a distichous manner (arranged in two vertical rows on the opposite sides of the stem); the adult plant will form a rosette. It is native to steep, inaccessible cliffs in the Olifants River Valley, very hot in summer, cold but frost-free in winter.



**References:** Jaarsveld, E. v. (2002) "Cliff hangers", *Veld and flora* 88: 154-158.

Walker, C. (2014) "Aloe hardyi—a rare South African cremnophyte," *Cactus world* 32: 289-292.

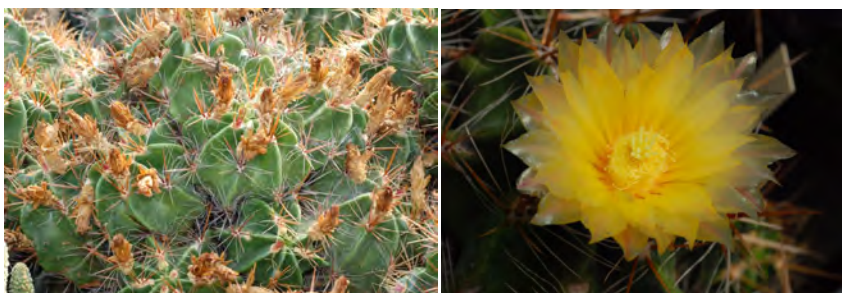
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### FEROCACTUS ROBUSTUS

*Ferocactus robustus* is an interesting "different" fero—instead of forming a large solitary stem, it is a clustering species, forming clumps up to 3 to 15 feet across. Each head, which can reach 7 inches in diameter, features about 8 acute ribs with widely spaced areoles. Yellow flowers are produced from summer on through the fall but usually there are not many blossoms open at any one time.

Elton Roberts writes: "The plant comes from the Mexican state of Puebla, which is down quite a way in Mexico. Keeping that in mind, the plant has taken cold down to 16 degrees F here where I live. With temperatures that dip that low the plant gets dark spots on the body. It is also hard to keep the lower areas of the stems from getting to look grungy. If you look closely in the photo of the plant you can see the discoloration on the lower reaches of the stems. To keep the plant from disfiguring like that try and keep them at or above 40 F over the winter. I had several of the plants during the big freeze of '90-91 and one of the plants died and the other lived through it. The one that lived through the freeze took a long time to come out of the effects of the cold. The plants in the photos are from that plant. I give my plants my regular soil mix and try to keep them above freezing. I keep them dry over the winter. I attribute the flowering of the plants this year to the fact that they have been receiving acidic water for the entire growing season."

*Sue*



## WINTER CARE OF ADENIUMS IN TUCSON

Adeniums are leafy tropical succulents that come from semiarid climates with ample summer rainfall and long, dry, frost-free winters. The overwintering tips below are appropriate for most other plants with similar forms and habitats, such as pachypodiums, plumerias, bursera and relatives, cyphostemma and alluaudia. These tips are also good for Phoenix and other low desert locations, keeping in mind that the cooler weather usually arrives a few weeks later there.



- In late September or October, species adeniums usually shed some of their foliage, beginning with the lower leaves. You should have noticed that the potting media stopped drying out so fast. This is a signal to reduce watering frequency. (This year—2015—has had a hot late summer and fall so far, and I've seen little leaf drop as of early October.)
- If plants drop all of their leaves, stop watering completely until spring. Exception: small plants (caudex less than 2 inches thick) will need some water to avoid shriveling and dying. This is risky, because winter water promotes root rot. Lightly water the surface—don't wet the whole pot—just often enough to keep the stems firm.
- Most hybrids and *A. obesum* are potentially evergreen if kept warm and moist. You can continue watering these normally as long as days are at least in the 80s and nights are above 50 F.
- By early November, nights are usually below the crucial 50 F. By now you should have done one of the following: moved the plants into a heated greenhouse or warm, sunny window. In these locations you can continue watering as long as the plants have substantial foliage; moved them to a frost-free locations sheltered from rain. A bright site is best, but dormant plants can tolerate being in the dark for a few months.
- In a warm, bright location many adeniums will continue to flower well into winter and perhaps all the way into spring, with or without leaves. In my hot (100 day, 55 night) greenhouse many adeniums don't go dormant, especially hybrids. (Caveat: all the species except *A. obesum* and apparently many hybrids require a dry winter rest period to flower well. *Adenium swazicum* needs only a couple of months, *A. arabicum* prefers five months, and *A. boehmianum* defoliates in November and usually doesn't leaf out until June. *Adenium arabicum* is variable, some populations such as Soodah Dwarf are potentially evergreen and everblooming. I've had poor flowering in the past two years, perhaps because I've been watering them throughout the year. This winter I'm going to withhold water from most of them to see what they do next spring and summer.
- I don't recommend it, but most larger adeniums can tolerate down to freezing if they are bone dry. Some will survive into the teens under a cover. Smaller or even large branches will freeze, but the plants usually recover if it doesn't happen every winter.

(This article, from the Tucson C&S Society's Nov. 2015 newsletter, is unsigned but I assume it's written by Mark Dimmitt. I thought it has application to our area – Sue)



# Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

## Membership Application / Renewal

**Annual Membership Renewal Due January 1<sup>st</sup>**

Single Membership renewal \$15.00    Family Membership renewal \$25.00

**New memberships** include a one-time fee of \$7.00 per member for each name badge as follows:

Single Membership \$15.00 plus one name badge \$7.00:    Total = \$22.00

Family Membership \$25.00 plus two name badges \$14.00:    Total = \$39.00

**Checks payable to: Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society (FC&SS)**

**Mail to: Polly Dunklin, 415 West Home Avenue, CA Fresno 93728**

**INFORMATION FOR CLUB USE ONLY:**

*The club publishes an annual Roster containing all current members' information as shown above and distributes it to club members. If you do not wish to have some of your information printed in the Roster place an  at the end of any line you wish to have omitted. If you wish to change the information enter the change in the line to the right.*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday(s) Optional – Month/Day \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in helping out in the following areas. Please contact me.     Show & Sale     Programs

Library     Publicity     Technology     Refreshments     Hospitality     Sunshine     Special Events

**Do you wish to receive the club's newsletter 'Cactus Corner News' by email?  or mail?**

**\*\*\* Due to increasing mailing costs, we encourage members to receive their newsletters electronically. For those members who do not have access to the Internet the newsletter will be sent by postal mail.**

~ **Please read and complete** ~

**Newsletter: Cactus Corner News**

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No Thanks.     Yes, I agree to the uses of these materials described above, except for any restrictions noted below:

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