

On the Dry Side

Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society

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Presidents Message

Welcome to 2018! I hope you have some terrific resolutions in place for a new year in your garden. Your Society’s board has not adopted official resolutions, at least not yet, but is ready and able to put together another year of interesting and productive activities for the Society’s gardeners of cacti and succulents.

Looking back to 2017, the Society learned from presentations by nine speakers on topics that ranged across the world of succulents, conducted two regional plant sales that attracted scores of buyers (and new members!), and enjoyed our traditional Country Store, Christmas Party and popular monthly potluck lunches that our members support creatively and generously.

Let us again welcome our continuing and new board members for 2018–2019, who are listed on the last page of this newsletter. They were officially seated during our December meeting, but those present probably did not notice this auspicious event because we have a low-key (close to invisible) ritual for seating board members. Still, they are now established in their positions and fully engaged in their services for the Society.

Let’s also very sincerely thank retirees Manson Waters and Jeffrey Brooks for their years of valuable service to the Society. I am pleased to report that they will both continue as active members, sharing their knowledge and energies.

This month’s newsletter reflects the graphical theme for the winter quarter. The Monterey Bay area sees only very moderate winter weather, so the snowflakes in this design are just symbolic. As we observe the wildfires, bombogenesis events, landslides and other horrific meteorological phenomena occurring elsewhere, it’s clear that we are gardening thankfully in paradise.



Photos by Fred Valentine

Save the Date!

MBACSS Meets

January 21, 2018

Potluck @ 12:30

Gathering @ 12:00

Program @ 1:00

Board Meets

January 21, 2018

Board @ 11:00

Members always

welcome to attend

Future Meetings

Third Sundays

Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 1716
 1960 Freedom Blvd.
 Watsonville, CA

Preview of January's Program

Starting a Collection: Geophytes & Caudiciforms

by Joseph Hidalgo

I have been growing xerophytes (cacti & succulents) for 30 years and I have been a potter for seven years. My collection has grown and shrunk and my interests have been hyper focused. In years past I specialized in Epiphyllum, medusoid Euphorbias, Eastern African Euphorbias, South African bulbs, species Pelargoniums, Stapeliads, Adromischus, Conophytum, geophytes and caudiciforms. Currently, my longest interest has been with the geophytes and caudiciforms.

Why, you may ask? My answer is simple: Endless Variety.

With both geophytes and caudiciforms, if you want to grow extra small you can, or if you only want to have huge plants, that can be done too. If you don't have a green house or you do, no problem.

Where do you start? Usually interest starts here. You are all sitting at today's meeting because you want to learn more about plants. You at one point of time saw that little blooming cacti at your local garden hardware store, bought it, killed it or not, admired it, went back for seconds or thirds. Perhaps you got advanced and went to a specialized nursery sale and got uncommon-to-rare gems that are not normally found elsewhere, that weird bulb from UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, the elephant yam (Dioscorea) from the club's semi annual sale, a Cussonia from Annie's annuals.

Now, your itch can't be scratched by Orchard Supply or Home Depot, so you advance into becoming a collector, buying online, special nurseries or only at club sales. Here you can find more from others like us who have taken it a step further and have created a business or sell a few from their own collections from which they are propagating. Great online sources include eBay, Out of Africa, Petra Crist's Rare Succulents Nursery, etc.

Finding out how to care for your new gems is can be overwhelming. If you are Internet savvy, typing in the name of plant yields great results, though sometimes not. At times you get a plant and there isn't anything to be found about it, recheck you spelling...lol. No, really, sometimes there may be a name and country of origin but not much else. Yikes!

Congrats! It is now in your possession and it's up to you to blog about its care and your success, or write its obituary. Often I think, "Perhaps I will not invest on that super cool \$200 Brachystelma with the really cool above ground caudex with the birdcage flowers," so painful to walk away, no good advice on cultivation exists!! Later, you may find yourself with a mind like me, playing a dumb game stating "Ok I won't eat out this week," and buy it anyway. Or perhaps you are Roger Lane and simply say I'll take two to go.

Anyway, my talk will be about starting your collection. A care primer for beginners: which geophytes or caudiciform plants are great for starting out which to avoid. I'll bring some pottery to dress up your babies, and perhaps a plant or two.

Brachystelma tuberosum

Credit: Wikimedia Commons
(no price listed)



Photo Gallery

MBACSS Holiday Party

Photos by Fred Valentine & Tom Karwin





January's Mini-Show Plants

Selections by Jeff Brook, Information by Wikipedia

Cactus

Any Cactus in a 6" or Smaller Container

A cactus (plural: cacti, cactuses, or cactus) is a member of the plant family Cactaceae, a family comprising about 127 genera with some 1750 known species of the order Caryophyllales.

The word "cactus" derives, through Latin, from the Ancient Greek κάκτος, *kaktos*, a name originally used by Theophrastus for a spiny plant whose identity is not certain.

Cacti occur in a wide range of shapes and sizes. Most cacti live in habitats subject to at least some drought. Many live in extremely dry environments, even being found in the Atacama Desert, one of the driest places on earth. Cacti show many adaptations to conserve water.

Almost all cacti are succulents, meaning they have thickened, fleshy parts adapted to store water. Unlike many other succulents, the stem is the only part of most cacti where this vital process takes place. Most species of cacti have lost true leaves, retaining only spines, which are highly modified leaves. As well as defending against herbivores, spines help prevent water loss by reducing airflow close to the cactus and providing some shade. In the absence of leaves, enlarged stems carry out photosynthesis.

Cacti are native to the Americas, ranging from Patagonia in the south to parts of western Canada in the north—except for *Rhipsalis baccifera*, which also grows in Africa and Sri Lanka.



Succulent

Aloe

Aloe (/æ'l'oʊi/, /'æloʊi, 'ælou/) is a genus containing over 500 species of flowering succulent plants. The most widely known species is Aloe vera, or "true aloe", so called because it is cultivated as the standard source of so-called "aloe vera" for assorted pharmaceutical purposes. Other species, such as Aloe ferox, also are cultivated or harvested from the wild for similar applications.

The APG IV system (2016) places the genus in the family Asphodelaceae, subfamily Asphodeloideae. Within the subfamily it may be placed in the tribe Aloeeae. In the past, it has been assigned to the family Aloaceae (now included in the Asphodeloideae) or to a broadly circumscribed family Liliaceae (the lily family). The plant Agave americana, which is sometimes called "American aloe", belongs to the Asparagaceae, a different family.

The genus is native to tropical and southern Africa, Madagascar, Jordan, the Arabian Peninsula, and various islands in the Indian Ocean (Mauritius, Réunion, Comoros, etc.). A few species have also become naturalized in other regions (Mediterranean, India, Australia, North and South America, etc.).

Pictured: Aloe succotrina, the Fynbos aloe



Cactus & Succulent Society of America

Synopses of Cactus and Succulent Journals

by CSSA Board Member Nels Christianson

As part of the CSSA's outreach to its affiliates, the CSSA board has recommended distribution of synopses of the CSSA's bimonthly journal with the hope that this effort might spur an interest in some club members to take a closer look at the CSSA and the Journal itself, and possibly consider becoming a member. As MBACSS members prefer, we could share synopses of future journals in this newsletter and/or on the [MBACSS website](http://mbacss.org/). To join the CSSA, visit <http://cssainc.org/>.

Synopsis of the *Cactus and Succulent Journal*, September–October 2017

A new species of *Aloe* from the Lúrio Waterfalls in Mozambique

Authors Tom A. McCoy, Antonius JH Rulken and Obety Baptista introduce and describe *Aloe argentifolia*, a new species with silvery-grey leaves that grows in the isolated, mid-river rock outcroppings in the Lúrio River Cataract of northeastern Mozambique. This species with decumbent stems has leaves that turn reddish during the dry season. The flowers are red to reddish orange. *A. argentifolia* is compared to *A. mawii*. It is the seventh described endemic aloe of Mozambique.

An introduction to cactus areoles part II

In this eleven-page, well-illustrated article, James D. Mauseth discusses spines, glochids, the shoot apical meristem of an areole and diversity of areoles on an individual plant. Among the many interesting observations made, the author writes that "most cactus spines...seem smooth, but studies with scanning electron microscopy show that in many species, the spine epidermis is rough, knobby, or cracked." In discussing glochids, he states that they "occur only in subfamily Opuntioideae, no other cacti have them" and continues, "Most opuntoid areoles produce their compliment of normal spines first then switch to producing glochids afterward". In one of his concluding remarks the author comments, "For students looking for research projects, I recommend studying the growth and development of cactus areoles. They are so diverse throughout the family that they must hold many clues about cactus evolution and ecology."

Book Review: "The genus *Ceropegia*"

Tim Harvey reviews "The genus *Ceropegia*" by Dennis de Kock, a book of 62 pages, over 350 color photos and 23 distribution maps. This book includes two chapters on taxa, a chapter in which species are listed alphabetically with images, a chapter containing maps, a chapter on cultivation which includes a section on grafting, and ends with a bibliography. Although the chapters on species and on maps could be improved, Tim considers this volume an invaluable resource as a reference and recommends that clubs acquire a copy for their library.

Book Review: "Succulents in cultivation – breeding new cultivars"

Tim Harvey reviews this massive tome of 248 pages by Gordon D. Rowley, with over 400 photos and illustrations of succulent cultivars. As stated in the review, "hybrids are now everywhere and here to stay". The first part of the book is complimented for its many "useful areas, from taxonomy to evolution, genetics and cultivation". The second part of the book presents chapters on succulent plant families, starting with Cactaceae, followed by Crassulaceae, both of which receive ample treatment. Following these are chapters on the many other succulent genera. Tim notes that the Epilogue is of interest due to its mixture of pictures of bizarre plants from various families. The bibliography and index at the end will be useful. Pictures of some of the well-known hybridizers and the fact that the quality of the paper and printing is excellent and the binding strong round out the attributes of this book, which receives a well-deserved recommendation.

Obituary: Iris Sheila Collette (1927-2017)

Tom McCoy reminisces about and gives tribute to Sheila Collette, a longtime friend of his and a Fellow of the CSSA, who the botanical world recently lost. A full twenty taxa have been named in her honor, including *Aloe colletteae* and *A. sheilae*. Ms. Collette had already spent many years botanizing in Borneo when she and her husband moved to Saudi Arabia in 1972. During the next 26 years she devoted herself to listing all the plants found growing within that country. In 1985 her two books, *An Illustrated guide to the Flowers of Saudi Arabia* was published, followed by *Wildflowers of Saudi Arabia* in 1999. By then she had documented over 2,100 taxa for the country. Nine aloes, two *Ceropegias* and a *Rhytidocaulon* were described by Ms. Collette, mostly in conjunction with John Lavranos.

Additionally, there is an important article ("Molecular analysis of the genus *Eriosyce*") by Fred Kattermann, and Leo Chance continues his series "Pushing the Limits: landscaping with cacti and succulents" with his article #26.

Online Resources: Cultivation of Cacti & Succulents

Let's review the differences between our winter dormant and summer dormant succulent plants. The primary advice related to dormancy is to provide water to plants that are growing, and reduce water to plants that are resting. This advice applies mostly to outdoor plants. In the Monterey Bay area's moderate climate, succulents have long growing seasons.

The following lists are from [Succulent Gardening](#). For additional info, click on this link for [Succulents and Sunshine](#).

WINTER DORMANT

This group is generally regarded as the "summer growers". They have adapted to our northern hemisphere cycle and are dormant from November through February. Many of these will also enter pseudo rest period for a few weeks during the hottest part of the summer before putting on a final burst of growth in September and October.

Genus	Family	Origin
Adenia	Passifloraceae	South Africa
Adenium	Apocynaceae	Africa
Agave	Asparagaceae	Mexico
Alluaudia	Didiereaceae	Madagascar
Brachystelma	Apocynaceae	South Africa
Bursera	Burseraceae	North & South America
Calibanus	Asparagaceae	Mexico
Ceropegia	Apocynaceae	Africa
Cissus	Vitaceae	Tropics
Cyphostemma	Vitaceae	Madagascar
Didieria	Didiereaceae	Madagascar
Dorstenia	Moraceae	Africa
Echeveria	Crassulaceae	Central America
Encephalartos	Zamiaceae	Africa
Euphorbia	Euphorbiaceae	South Africa, Madagascar
Ficus	Moraceae	Tropics
Fockea	Apocynaceae	South Africa
Huernia	Apocynaceae	East & South Africa
Ibervillea	Acanthaceae	Mexico, Baja California
Ipomoea	Convolvulaceae	Tropics
Jatropha	Euphorbiaceae	North & South America
Lithops	Aizoaceae	South Africa
Monadenium	Euphorbiaceae	Africa, Madagascar
Moringa	Moringaceae	NW India (Himalayas)
Operculicarya	Anacardiaceae	Tropics
Pachypodium	Apocynaceae	Madagascar and Africa
Pedilanthus	Euphorbiaceae	Mexico
Plumeria	Apocynaceae	Central America, Mexico
Pseudolithos	Apocynaceae	NE Africa
Pterodiscus	Pedaliaceae	South Africa
Raphionacme	Apocynaceae	Africa
Sinningia	Gesneriaceae	Central & South America
Stapelianthus	Apocynaceae	Madagascar
Synadenium	Euphorbiaceae	East Africa
Tillandsia	Bromeliaceae	South America
Trichocaulon	Asclepiadaceae	Madagascar
Trichodiadema	Aizoaceae	South Africa
Xerosicyos	Cucurbitaceae	Madagascar

SUMMER DORMANT

Usually referred to as the "winter growers", these genera are dormant during the warmer months of May through August. Their primary growth actually occurs during autumn and spring while slowing considerably during true winter. Many will exhibit marginal growth during the summer months as well, especially in the Liliaceae (Lily) and Crassulaceae (Stonecrop) families.

Genus	Family	Origin
Adromischus	Crassulaceae	South Africa
Aeonium	Crassulaceae	Canary Islands
Aloe	Asphodelaceae	South Africa
Anacampseros	Anacampserotaceae	South Africa
Astroloba	Asphodelaceae	South Africa
Avonia \	Anacampserotaceae	South Africa
Bowiea	Asparagaceae	South Africa
Bulbine	Asphodelaceae	South Africa
Ceraria	Didiereaceae	South Africa
Conophytum	Aizoaceae	South Africa
Cotyledon	Crassulaceae	South Africa
Crassula	Crassulaceae	South Africa
Dioscorea	Dioscoreaceae	Tropical Regions
Dudleya	Crassulaceae	SW N. America
Fouquieria	Fouquieriaceae	Mexico
Gasteria	Asphodelaceae	South Africa
Gibbaeum	Aizoaceae	South Africa
Graptopetalum	Crassulaceae	Mexico
Graptoveria	Graptopetalum x Echeveria	Mexico
Haemanthus	Amaryllidaceae	South Africa
Haworthia	Asphodeloideae	South Africa
Kalanchoe	Crassulaceae	South Africa
Neohenricia	Aizoaceae	South Africa
Othonna	Asteraceae	South Africa
Pachycormus	Anacardiaceae	Baja California
Pachyphytum	Crassulaceae	Mexico
Pachyveria	Pachyphytum x Echeveria	Mexico
Pelargonium	Geraniaceae	South Africa +
Peperomia	Piperaceae	Central America
Portulacaria	Didiereaceae	South Africa
Sansevieria	Asparagaceae	South Africa
Sarcocaulon	Geraniaceae	South Africa
Sedeveria	Sedum x Echeveria.	Mexico
Sedum	Crassulaceae	Numerous
Senecio	Asteraceae	Numerous
Stomatium	"Mesembs"	South Africa
Talinum	Talinaceae	Tropical Regions
Tylecodon	Crassulaceae	South Africa

Officers and Chairpersons, 2018

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 SHOW — Naomi Bloss & Janet Sparks
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Members Update

Welcome our latest new member, Joanne Madril.
 We're glad to have her join us!

Here's one more reminder to renew your membership for 2018. Only current members will be included in the MBACSS Membership Roster and will receive *On the Dry Side*. The annual membership fee (\$15 plus \$5 for each additional family member) is a great bargain considering the entertaining and educational monthly meetings, opportunities to buy, sell, and win plants for your garden, and enjoy the company of other enthusiastic and knowledgeable growers of cacti and succulents.

Make your check out to **Monterey Bay Area Cactus and Succulent Society** and mail it to Treasurer Ruth Pantry, 37 Young Drive, Salinas, CA 93901. Include your (clearly written) name, address, phone number and email address. You could also give it directly to Ruth at our next meeting. Don't delay because the roster will be printed very soon!

Finally, as mentioned before, we welcome photos of your garden to include in *On the Dry Side*. We also welcome articles for publication in this newsletter. If you have written about or photographed a public or private succulent garden you have visited. MBACSS members likely will be glad to learn about the garden and your experiences and impressions.

On the Dry Side

Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society
<http://mbsucculent.org>

