

C A C T U S CHRONICLE

F E B R U A R Y 2 0 2 3

VOL. 91 ISSUE 02

MONTHLY PROGRAM

**JOHN
MARTINEZ**



**DYCKIA AND
THEIR ALLIES,**
those other succulents

NEW MEETING SEGMENT!

ELI COHEN

ARID PLANTS A-Z

please bring in problem plants,
plant ID + special interest plants

**WE'RE
BRINGING
REFRESHMENTS
BACK!**

MONTHLY MEETINGS ARE HELD EVERY FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

MEETING START TIME: 7PM, DOORS OPEN AT 6:15PM

ONE GENERATION: 18255 VICTORY BLVD. RESEDA CA.



Photo credit: John Martinez

T H I S M O N T H ' S S P E A K E R

JOHN MARTINEZ



John lives in Moorpark, California with his wife Linda and is a retired Los Angeles Fire Department Battalion Chief. Currently he serves on the Board of Directors of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, is a member of several local garden clubs and is a co-founders of the Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society in Thousand Oaks, California. John is also a past volunteer at the Huntington Botanical Garden. He has been growing xeric plants most of his adult life and for the past 12 years has shared a cooperative succulent growing compound in Somis, California with three other like minded growers. Aside from tending to his plant collection, John's time is divided between gardening, golf, photography, occasional fly fishing, and grandchildren.

As a native of Southern California, he attended California State University of Northridge where he received a Bachelor's Degree in Art.



Photo credit: John Martinez

FROM THE MESSAGE PRESIDENT

HI EVERYONE,

One of the biggest concerns we have is how many members will attend our in-person meetings. Zoom was becoming problematic so the Board felt it was prudent to discontinue it and offer incentives for members to return. The safety and health of our members are always our first concern so we will continue to encourage attendees to wear a mask especially if you are uncomfortable being around others who will not be wearing a mask. We are inviting everyone who has not joined us this year, please do so. Bring a friend, also.

One of the big missing features is the refreshment table. (One of my goals was to achieve the status of LACSS being the best fed club in southern CA. That goal was met early on.) The Board voted to continue a pot luck table with alphabetically assignment of contributors. So, starting in March, it will be announced whose turn it is for the next month. More details to be announced at the meeting.

The much anticipated "Euphorbias in Southern Africa, Vol. 1 and 2" are on order and will be available for checkout at this meeting. I will not have time to review them before the newsletter goes to press so I will be depending on whoever checks them out to provide feedback. For the March meeting, "The NeverEnding Story of Astrophytums Hybrids" and "The NeverEnding Story of Astrophytums 2" will be added to our Library.

Some of the new features we will include into our program will be "Arid Plants A-Z" with Eli Cohen! Announcements on the screen prior to meeting, and maybe even a "Secret Word" which will be published in the newsletter for you to find. Everyone who finds it and whispers it to me will get a free raffle ticket. In addition to our usual raffle, we will offer a few items for a silent auction. The Freebie Table is available for any plants, etc you want to share with others.

I know the rain kept a lot of people inside and at home. Now that Mother Nature is providing more sunshine, we should be outside checking on our plants. None of them should be in standing water. I don't like my feet to be wet and cold and neither do our plants. This topic will be a brief discussion at the beginning of the February meeting.

Before the new year had even begun, we were asking for volunteers. No surprise. It's what we do best because we are the best at taking on a challenge and making it perfect. This month's request concerns the Sepulveda Garden Center Cactus Garden. We would like for it to look spiffy for our Festival in April. It will be a good learning tool for some of our Festival visitors – and for us. It needs to be weeded and some dead growth removed. I think a Saturday or two (half days) in March should complete this project. A few of garden renters have started clearing the walking path so we only need to clean around the plants. Easy-Peasy.

I look forward to seeing everyone and sharing our winter rain plant experiences with each other. If anyone would like to arrive around 5:30 and help set up our meeting room, it will be greatly appreciated. The ONEG staff will have the tables and chairs in position, we just need to move them an inch or two (LOL), pull the storage bins out from under the stage, place table cloths, signage etc. to give it the proper cactus look. Again, Easy-Peasy

See you soon. Stay safe and healthy!
Joyce

B O A R D OF DIRECTORS

2 0 2 3

LACSS MISSION STATEMENT

The Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society (LACSS) cultivates the study & enjoyment of cacti & succulent plants through educational programs & activities that promote the hobby within a community of fellow enthusiasts & among the greater public.

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ARID PLANTS A-Z

WITH ELI COHEN

Howdy everyone! My name is Eli and I'm excited to introduce this new section of the newsletter, 'Arid Plants A-Z', along with my friend and fellow xerophile Gianluca! Together, we'll explore the world of spectacular xerophytes in depth. Join us back here regularly for fascinating new discoveries in the dry plant world, tips and tricks for at home cultivation, and anything else of interest to experienced growers and newcomers alike. We hope to inform and inspire all who read.



PLANT ^{Of} _{the} MONTH

2 0 2 3

JANUARY

Matucana, Submatucana, Oroya
Aeonium

FEBRUARY

Coryphantha, Neolloydia, Neobesseyia
Sarcocaulon

MARCH

Echinocactus
Anacampseros, Avonia, Grahamia

APRIL

Aztekium, Epithelantha
Aloinopsis, Antimima, Aptenia, Argyroderma

MAY

Cacti staged as miniature
Succulent staged as miniature
(Diameter of pot
NO LARGER THAN 3")

JUNE

Favorites

JULY

Melocactus
Euphorbia Medusoid

AUGUST

Mammillaria (Dichotomous & 2 Heads)
Gasteria, Astroloba

SEPTEMBER

Cacti from Coahuila
Nolina, Calibanus, Beaucarnea

OCTOBER

Espostoa
Fouquieria

NOVEMBER

Crest and Monstrose

DECEMBER

Holiday Awards Party



Photo credit: *Coryphantha elephantidens* by Kimberly Gomez-Tong

P L A N T O F T H E M O N T H

SARCOCAULON

B Y K Y L E W I L L I A M S

This month we focus on *Monsonia*, the Bushman's Candles, a genus of small succulents and caudiciforms native to South Africa. They belong to the Geraniaceae, or Geranium Family, and are closely related to the better known *Pelargonium*. *Monsonia* differs from *Pelargonium* primarily in having "actinomorphic" flowers instead of zygomorphic ones. For the non-botanists out there, that means the flowers of *Monsonia* are more or less circular and you could divide them into two equal halves no matter where you draw the line (like a pie or cake). Zygomorphic flowers are symmetrical in one plane only, just like a person's face. There is only one direction you could divide the flower in two with equal halves.



Comparison of Monsonia and Pelargonium flowers



Monsonia herrei

At this point it is important to have a discussion about the proper name for these plants. Traditionally, *Monsonia* has referred to the plants in this group that are herbaceous while *Sarcocaulon* referred to the species with fat, woody stems (*Sarcocaulon* means "fat stem"). You may notice that the plant of the month list called them *Sarcocaulon*, and even I was unaware of the real story before researching this article. However, nearly 20 years ago botanists determined they were all members of the same genus, and the proper name for the genus is *Monsonia* not *Sarcocaulon*. More recent studies using the DNA of the plants confirms this finding is correct. While some may think it odd to have the herbaceous and woody species together, it really is no big deal. You only have to look to *Pelargonium* to see that a diverse array of species, from herbs, to woody shrubs, to geophytes, all happily coexist in one genus without anyone raising an eyebrow.



Monsonia crassicaule

As for the plants themselves, they make wonderful additions to any caudiciform or winter growing succulent collection. The plants most commonly grown by cactus and succulent collectors are the woody *Sarcocaulon* group. They produce leaves when conditions are ideal for growth but drop them readily when the soil dries out, much in the same way as the unrelated *Fouquieria* does. The flowers are usually white to pale pink, or even red, and an inch or two across. While called winter growers, it should be noted that some species, most notably *Monsonia vanderietiae*, are "opportunistic" growers that can grow most any time of year that it receives moisture.

CORYPHANTHA, ESCOBARIA (AKA NEOBESSEYA) + NEOLLOYDIA

B Y K Y L E W I L L I A M S

*Coryphantha elephantidens*

Coryphantha, Escobaria (including Neobesseya) & Neolloydia are 3 genera (57, 23, & 3 species respectively) of small North American cacti similar in appearance to Mammillaria and were originally included in that genus. They share in common a small, mostly globular, stature and an incredible level of cold tolerance, at least in some species. This is especially noteworthy in *Escobaria vivipara* and *E. missouriensis* which are particularly widespread species covering most of western and midwestern North America. In fact, the native range of *E. vivipara* extends all the way into Canada, a feat matched only by a few species of *Opuntia*. This cold tolerance allows people in even the coldest climates to grow these species outdoors.

While all plants in this group are relatively small, many can form good sized clumps in time (much like *Mammillaria*). Some of the variation between species

include having globular plants and more cylindrical, upright plants. Flowers vary from yellow to pink. Some species are covered in dense white spines while others are more sparsely covered, allowing the green body of the plant to shine through. A large number of species produce tap roots. Cultivation is similar to *Mammillaria* and other small cacti. While some members of these genera are renowned for their cold tolerance, keep in mind many species come from warm climates. Of course that isn't much of an issue for us in California, but anyone growing them in cold climates needs to make sure they pick the cold tolerant species.

Coryphantha and *Escobaria* are two closely related genera that are in turn closely related to *Mammillaria*. In fact, many botanists feel that *Escobaria* should not be recognized as a genus, instead lumping all the species in *Coryphantha* itself. This is what the authors of "The Flora of North America" the field guide to all the plants of the USA and Canada, chose to do. To make it even more complicated, there is evidence to suggest that *Coryphantha* shouldn't be a genus either and should all be considered species of *Mammillaria*! *Coryphantha* and *Escobaria* differ from *Mammillaria* largely in flowering on new growth while *Mammillaria* blooms primarily on previous year's growth. *Coryphantha* and *Escobaria* differ from each other only by details of the seeds. *Neolloydia* is also part of this mix in that one species seems close to *Coryphantha* while another seems closer to *Mammillaria*. This suggests it could itself not be a valid genus and will eventually be split up and put into different genera. However, for now we recognize it as a distinct genus similar to *Coryphantha* but differing in features of the tubercles and seeds. Confused yet? Unless you are a botanist it doesn't really matter. The important thing is to learn about these plants and just call them a name you are comfortable with until the botanists sort out the relationship issues. Don't be shocked, however, if one day we are calling all of them *Mammillaria* once again.

*Escobaria vivipara**Coryphantha minima*



HUNTING THE RARE

by Dan Christiansen

When I was 6 years old, my mother gifted me a small *Thelocactus*. I was mesmerized by the plants symmetry and proud my parents would trust me not to stick myself on its many sharp spines. Watching it slowly bloom was witnessing the natural worlds magic in front of me, and a lesson in patience when I tried to force the flower to stay open.

30 years later in Los Angeles California, my love of cacti and arid plants would reawaken. Settling into a new apartment, I needed a breath of life in absence of any pets. Fortunately, a sale up the street landed me a bounty of succulents and a large *Echinopsis* that speared underneath a fingernail on day one.

After a few weeks indoors, the plants wore their suffering plainly. The bright indirect light, was far from what these sun worshippers needed. Fortunately, with a fire escape just down the hallway, my plants found a new home unlike the first British convicts arriving in Australia.

Within days, every plant stood taller and prouder. Fortunately, these were tough individuals, tolerant of my initial clumsy attempts at plant care. Over the following years, naked sun gave way to shade cloth, ultra-rich soil swapped out for porous potting mixes, aggressive watering making way for scheduled hydration specific to each plant's individual needs.

Now I'm here. What was once an idle distraction has become a big part of my identity. I carry on a tradition of plant care embraced by two grandfathers, whose talents live on through my work. From basic care and growing to exploring habitats and artful staging, this pursuit and I are inseparable.

Whether you're a novice or expert, *Hunting the Rare* will show you plant collecting through my unique perspective. Expect entertainment, motivation, and inspiration in an ongoing series of plant articles exclusive to this newsletter. My name is Dan, let's get this started.



Photo credit: *Notocactus magnificus* by Kimberly Gomez-Tong

Opportunities for you!

We still have openings waiting for you.

Here is a good opportunity to get involved
with LACSS activities.

Share your expertise or learn a new skill.
You make LACSS the great organization that it is!!

Are you interested in:

Facebook

Twitter

Publicity

Communications Chair

Refreshment Coordinator

Awards Dinner Coordinator (December)

For more details, see Joyce at the monthly meeting.

Thanking you in advance for stepping up and helping out.

L A C S S A T U R D A Y PROGRAM

GETTING YOUR PLANTS SHOW READY WITH DEAN KARRAS

**SATURDAY, MARCH 11TH 2023
SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER
10AM**

AN EMAIL BLAST WILL BE SENT OUT

At our next Saturday Program, Dean will be giving a workshop on plant staging for all those who wish to enter or show their plants in April.

Attendees are encouraged to bring in plants along with the pottery they wish to use. Dean will be bringing plants and pottery for sale, an assortment of top dressing, as well as rocks for staging. He will supply soil and basic top dressing free of charge to anyone who snags a plant or piece of pottery.



**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING,
PLEASE EMAIL LEEARC@AOL.COM**

Dean Karras began collecting and growing cacti from seed as a hobby in 2008. He is a member of the Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society since 2017, and San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society since 2019, where he now serves as Board Member and Show Chair. He realized his long-standing dream of owning his own nursery to serve the local community when he opened Gnosis Nursery in July 2020, which he now runs full-time. When not busy propagating and selling plants, Dean can be found exploring and photographing the Desert Southwest and Baja.

**GNOSIS
NURSERY**

663 CA-78,
Ramona, CA 92065
(480) 363-4460

MEMBERS!

We have started a new year which means membership dues are now **OVERDUE**. If you have NOT renewed, this will be the last Cactus Chronicle you will receive.

If you wish to continue receiving the LACSS monthly newsletter, please go to our website, click on the button "Membership" and follow the instructions for renewing your membership for 2023 or simply click this button below to be redirected.

[CLICK HERE TO RENEW ONLINE](#)

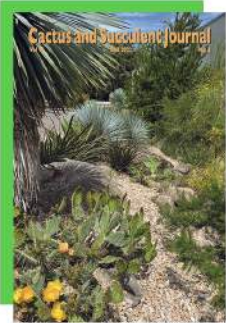
If you have any questions, feel free to contact our new Membership Chair, Kelsey Osterman at kelseyosterman@yahoo.com

We look forward to hearing from you.



Cactus and Succulent Society of America

Founded in 1929, The Cactus and Succulent Society of America is an international community dedicated to advancing the appreciation, knowledge, research, and conservation of cacti and succulents.



Cactus and Succulent Journals — available now

The leading publication of its kind since 1929. Featuring popular and scientific articles about cacti and other succulent plants, including caudiciform and pachycaul succulents and xerophytes, horticultural instruction, new plants, and more.

CSJ is essential reading for all hobbyists and students of cacti and succulents, botanists, alpha-taxonomists, ecologists, conservationists, and professional growers.

[Get the journal](#)

CSSA 2023 Convention

July 12-16, 2023

The CSSA and Colorado Cactus and Succulent Society invite you to visit Colorado Springs for the 2023 CSSA Convention.

- Nationally and internationally renowned speakers.
- Field trips to visit remarkable gardens along the Front Range.
- Traditional welcome evening, banquet, plant auction, and more.
- World class vendors with unique cacti and succulents for sale.

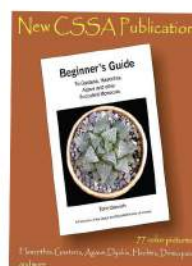
[Learn more](#)



Open up a CSSA book

CSSA is growing a library of speciality books, with more published works coming soon.

[Learn more](#)



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Enjoy exclusive benefits and support CSSA's mission of conservation, research, outreach, and educational projects.

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UPCOMING CSSA WEBINAR

ATTILA KAPITANY

WHAT DOES PARADISE LOOK LIKE?

Join us Saturday, February 4th
at 10:00AM PDT for the next
speaker in our series of
webinars featuring experts
from around the world

[Click here to register!](#)



While I, by no means, have a crystal ball or know what each of we growers and collectors have in mind with our plants and why we desire them, I have a long history of visiting and questioning people about such things while also photographing their collections and gardens! Habitat scenes will also be included. So this is a pictorial treat with my thoughts and observations about different concepts of a cactus and succulent paradise!

Attila Kapitany is well known for his passion for cacti and succulents. He is a past president of the Cactus & Succulent Society of Australia with 10 years in this position. Attila has over thirty eight years' experience growing and enthusiastically marketing cacti and succulents. Attila is also a member of the Horticultural Media in Australia, writing regularly in magazines, journals and newspapers and promoting succulent plants.

Attila has co-written seven books with Rudolf Schulz about succulents, with an eighth book a solo effort on Australian native species. His newest publications are a series of ten booklets on xerophytic Australian plants.

Since 2007, Attila has dedicated much of his time and resources to promoting our lesser known Australian succulent plants, touring the Australian and international speaking circuits regularly and featuring on television and radio.

2023 CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

- FEB. 11 SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY WINTER SHOW AND SALE
BALBOA PARK, ROOM 101, SAN DIEGO, CA INFO 858-382-179704
- MAR. 3-4 ORANGE COUNTY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE
FRI. 9AM-6PM, SAT. 9AM-4PM INFO CALL 657-549-0702
1000 S. STATE COLLEGE BL., (ANAHEIM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH)
ANAHEIM, CA
- MAR. 3-4 FRESNO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE
FRI. 10AM-5PM, SAT. & SUN. 8:30AM-5PM
BIG FRESNO FAIR, 1121 S. CHANCE AVE., FRESNO, CA
- MAR. 17-18 SAN GABRIEL CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY WINTER SHOW AND SALE
8AM-5PM INFO MANNY RIVERA 626-780-6957 / JAMES LEMOS 626-201-5519
ARCADIA MASONIC CENTER, 50 W DUARTE RD., ARCADIA, CA
- APR. 2 CONEJO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE 9AM-4PM
558 N. VENTU PARK ROAD, THOUSAND OAKS, CA 91320
INFO WWW.CONEJOCSS.COM OR CONEJOCSS@HOTMAIL.COM
- APR. 15-16 SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE
DAILY 9AM-4PM INFO CALL 310-346-6206
PALOS VERDES ART CENTER, 5504 CRESTRIDGE RD., PALOS VERDES, CA
- APR. 22-23 LOS ANGELES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE
SATURDAY 9AM-4PM. SUNDAY 9AM-3PM INFO WWW.LACACTUS.COM
SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER, 16633 MAGNOLIA BLVD., ENCINO, CA
- APR. 22-23 PALOMAR CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY FALL SHOW AND SALE
SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN ADMISSION REQUIRED
SAT. 9AM-5PM, SUN. 10AM-3PM INFO RWKOPFSTEIN@GMAIL.COM
SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDEN, CONSERVATORY,
230 QUAIL GARDENS DR., ENCINITAS, CA
- APR. 29-30 SAN JOSE CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE
SAT. 10AM-5PM, SUN. 10AM-4PM INFO. WWW.CSSSJ.ORG
PETERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL, 1380 ROSALIA AVENUE, SUNNYVALE, CA
- APR. 30 HUNTINGTON SPRING PLANT SALE - RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
10AM-5PM INFO RESERVATIONS- HUNTINGTON.ORG, SALE CALL 626-405-3571
HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS, 1151 OXFORD RD., SAN MARINO, CA