



CACTUS CHRONICLE

October 2013

Plant of the Month

Cacti from Coahuila
Crassula

Refreshments

Letters
E—H

New Members

July

Bill Lee
Janice Lee

September

Glenn Grisham
Robert Petersom
Chris Thornberg
Mark Watters

Editor

Phyllis Frieze

frieze.phyllis@yahoo.com

Visit Us on the web <http://www.lacss.com>

Mission Statement:

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

Our next general meeting is

October 3

Program Title: Nature and Cacti from Patagonia

By: Guillermo Rivera

Born in Argentina, owner of South America Nature Tours (former Cactus Expeditions), a company dedicated to the organization of tours for the last 12 years, throughout South America (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador), Mexico and South Africa, with emphasis on bromeliads, cacti, and orchids, and birding.

A former researcher at the University of Cordoba, Argentina, a BS degree in Biology University of Cordoba, a MS in Marine Biology from Northeastern University and a PhD in Botany University of Cordoba. Next year he is planning another trip to South Africa and Baja California, as well as a new trip to Madagascar. Both will focus on the succulent flora of these places. If you wish to be kept informed about our future trips, please send email to Guillermo at rivera@intecar.com.ar or info@cactusexpeditions.com or visit website: www.southamericanaturetours.com



Nature and Cacti from Patagonia

The program will take us to a part of South America where people seldom travel in search of cacti. It is probably the reason why so many collectors and hobbyist alike are not very familiar with some genera such as Pterocactus, Austrocactus, Mahiuenia etc.

Most people visit Patagonia in search of beautiful landscapes, snowcapped mountains, glacier lakes surrounded of pristine forests, incredible wildlife on the coast, among many other attractions.

The truth is that, even though we can find all those things, there are over 40 species of cacti that grow at these latitudes. Because of their isolation, these plants are seldom known to most collectors or cacti enthusiasts. Also, because of their habitat, these cacti would tolerate colder weather, and some of them even more humid conditions in the winter than plants from Northwestern Argentina.

This talk will attempt to show you the diversity of these poorly known plants as well as some beautiful scenery from Northern Patagonia

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Meeting Refreshments

Leah Imamura

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Monthly Drawing

President's Message—October 2013

At the recent Succulent Symposium, John Folsom, Director of the Huntington Botanical Gardens, affectionately described our community as one of "succulent geeks who can talk endlessly about our gardens and collections." Fortunately, we have each other to talk to after we have scared all of our less-enlightened friends away. I'd like to describe some of the wonderful ways that we build a sense of community among ourselves.

The September meeting presentation by LACSS members John Martinez and Tim Harvey is a terrific example. Their presentation on plant photography was prepared especially for our club (though I imagine that they will soon be invited to visit other clubs as well). They honed their own thoughts and techniques as they worked on their slides, narratives, and research and they had our club members in mind. They collaborated as they divided the topics so as not to overlap with each other's presentation. In the end, they offered a broad range of information that inspired the novice photographer and refreshed the memories of some of the more experienced ones. Thank you, John and Tim.

On September 21, about 35 club members enjoyed a field trip to gardens of Artie Chavez and Kim Thorpe, and of Phyllis and Steve Frieze. As described by John Martinez in an article in this issue, the trip was a huge success, not only because of the amazing plants but also because of the sense of camaraderie engendered by these visits.

On September 28, Steve Frieze will host a mentoring session on staging succulents for members at his home. Mentoring new members is an important function of our club, as successful potting, propagating, and growing fuels our passion for the hobby. Many LACSS members generously give their time to teach the tricks of the trade to novice member collectors. No wonder our club has grown to over 200 members.

October 26 is scheduled for a clean-up day at the Sepulveda Garden Center Cactus Garden. LACSS has refurbished this garden as an effort to educate the Los Angeles community about succulents, and it is flourishing. This year, we will add signage to identify the plants. Please save this date to come out to work for a few hours with your friends. More details will follow.

And a quick thank you to those with last names from A – D for September's yummy refreshments. Check the first page of the *Cactus Chronicles* for upcoming refreshment reminders. Until October 3!

Roxie Esterle
President

LACSS Winter Garden Tour

Saturday, September 21, was the third in a series of LACSS Garden Tours for calendar year 2013. As with all the events this year, this Garden Tour was a huge success. The field trip gave us the opportunity to see some great plants, spend time with friends, and talk about one of our favorite subjects.... plants.

The morning started out with a visit to the magnificent cactus and succulent collection of Kim Thorpe and Artie Chavez. Over the years, they have amassed a very impressive collection of rare, mature, and well-staged plants. Comments like "Look at this one," "I wonder how old that one is," and "Where do they get all these great staging pots?" were heard throughout the morning. And of course, Kim put out a wonderful spread of snacks.

The second stop was Desert Creations, at the home of Phyllis and Steve Frieze. We started out with a delightful lunch provided by Desert Creations, and then had the opportunity to see Phyllis and Steve's magnificent new garden and collection plants and browse through the nursery. There seemed to be something for everyone and many of the visitors went home with some new found treasures. I was especially impressed with their selection of recently imported African succulents.

Thank you Kim, Artie, Phyllis and Steve for hosting the event and thank you to all those who participated.

VP of Special Events
John Martinez



**LACSS
Mentoring Program Update
October 2013**

This is an update on the Mentoring Program. At the July meeting we received 9 requests for mentoring, most were for general information and Gasteria/Haworthia.

Based on this input:

Artie Chavez and Steve Frieze have agreed to host a General Information session at Steve's home in North Hills. Information will include basic plant care, transplanting, light, watering and other topics.

Scott Schaffer has also agreed to host a discussion on Gasteria and Haworthia.

This program is an excellent opportunity for new members, as well as long term members to learn from our experts.

Attached are the Topics for which mentors have been identified. We will circulate another sign up sheet at the October meeting for those who want to take advantage of this program. If you are unable to attend the October meeting and wish to sign up for the program, please contact me directly.

We welcome feedback and suggestions on how this program could be more helpful.

Thanks,

John Suciu
Johns.three@gmail.com
818-429-1647

LACSS Mentoring Program

Topics

Collection quality and improvement
Where to grow your plants
When to transplant
Proper light conditions
Watering

Landscaping options
Pest control
Propagation-seed, root & leaf
Staging
Winter maintenance

Plant of the Month

2013

October

Cacti from Coahuila
Crassula

November

Crest-Montrose Crest-
Montrose

December

Holiday Party

2014

January

Mammillaria without
hooked spines
Pelargonium

February

Columnar Cacti
Aloe Hybrids

March

Opuntias (So. America)
Agave

April

Gymnocalycium singles
Yucca, Nolina,
Calibanus, Beaucarnea

May

Buiningia, Uebelmania
Mesembryanthemaceae
(other than Lithops &
Conophytum)

June

Favorite, Favorite

July

Escobaria, Corypantha
Cucurbitaceae

August

Obregonia, Strombo-
cactus, Echinomastus
Fockea, Raphionacme,
Brachystelma

September

Thelocactus
Fouqueria

October

Ariocarpus
Euphorbia
(Madagascar)

Plant of the Month - September Winners

Succulent -- Dorstenia / Ficus

Rookie Division

First	Marquita Ellias	Dorstenia crispa
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Novice Division

First	Jim Esterle	Ficus rigalosa
Second	Jim Esterle	Ficus palmeri
Third	John Suciu	Ficus petiolaris
Third	John Suciu	Dorstenia foetida

Advanced Division

First	Kim Thorpe	Dorstenia gigas
Second	Kim Thorpe	Ficus petiolaris
Third	Sandy Chase	Ficus palmeri
Third	Kim Thorpe	Dorstenia sp.

Open Division

First	Artie Chavez	Ficus nerifolia
Second	Artie Chavez	Ficus sp.
Third	Manny Rivera	Dorstenia gigas

Cactus - Astrophytum

Rookie Division

First	Kathryn Boorer	Astrophytum asterias 'super kabuto'
Second	Kathryn Boorer	Astrophytum myriostigma
Second	Danielle Duboff	Astrophytum ornatum
Third	Linda Holub	Astrophytum ornatum
Third	Danielle Duboff	Astrophytum myriostigma nuda

Novice Division

First	John Suciu	Astrophytum ornatum 'super kabuto'
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Advanced Division

First	Kim Thorpe	Astrophytum myriostigma
Second	Kim Thorpe	Astrophytum asterias
Third	Kim Thorpe	Astrophytum myriostigma
Third	Rio Cernik	Astrophytum group

Open Division

First	John Matthews	Astrophytum caput-medusae
Second	Manny Rivera	Astrophytum myriostigma

DON'T MISS THE FUN!!
LOS ANGELES CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
HOLIDAY PARTY

December 7, 2013, 5:30 PM
At the Sepulveda Garden Center
16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino

Potluck Dinner– Plant Auction
Plant Exchange Activity
Plant-of-the-Month Total Points Awards!

Each attendee is requested to bring one side dish, salad, or dessert.
Be sure to have all food and gifts at the center between 5-5:30 pm

We need volunteers to help set-up and clean up.

Please call or email Barbara Hall to sign up
at (818) 368-6914 or lbcjhall@aol.com

- Great dinner that includes *succulent* roast turkey and ham provided by the club (PS: we need 3 cooks to prepare them.... any volunteers?)
- Recognition and prizes for Plant-of-the-Month award winners
- Plant / Gift Exchange
- Party favor plants for all participants
- Prize for the best-grown *Eriosyce heinrichiana* –bring last year's holiday plant to compete in this category
- Fabulous auction with all proceeds going to our club
- Free special raffle ticket to folks who renew their membership by December 5

All members are invited and may bring one guest.

Cacti Native to Coahuila State in Mexico



Ariocarpus kotschoubeyanus

Located in the central part of northern Mexico, the state of Coahuila shares its borders with the once Mexican land of Texas in the U.S. along the Rio Bravo or Rio Grande to the north, and with the states of Nuevo Leon to the east, Zacatecas to the south, Durango to the southwest, and Chihuahua to the west.

Its vast area of 151,563 sq. kilometers makes it the third largest Mexican state in terms of territory, only behind Chihuahua and Sonora. Coahuila is located within the Chihuahuan Desert. Also standing out as part of the state's physical features are the Mapimi Desert, and the fertile lands of the so-called Lagunera region shared with the neighboring state of Durango.

The hydrological zone of the Rio Bravo- Rio Conchos lies within the state's limits. The Rio Bravo is the northern frontier and flows into the Gulf of Mexico, as well as the basin of the Nezes River-Aguanaval River, another major hydrological system within the region. Some other rivers are born in the local mountain chains, including the Alermos, Nacadores, Monclova, San Diego, and Sabinas Rivers.

Local climate usually includes dry or semi-dry conditions, along with disturbingly high temperatures across the lowlands (some areas of Coahuila can reach high temperatures of 120°-125°F) while the pine and oak forests produce fresher and more moderate conditions along the eastern Sierra Madre. The rest of the territory is home to typical desert scrubland, containing *Dircaea*, wild-lettuce, cassava and thistle bushes.

About 12,000 years ago, Nomadic hunters entered this region, which once included South Texas. Archeological evidence suggests that early hunter-gatherer cultures evolved into fixed societies that engaged in agriculture and fishing and used area caves as shelter. Later, Coahuila became home to several Indian tribes, including the Huauchichiles, Coahuiltecos, Ioboscos, Imtilas and Kayacos. When the Spaniards arrived, they found the natives to be peaceful and prosperous. Sadly, nearly 90 percent of the indigenous population was killed by European diseases.



Astrophytum coahuilense

The Spanish colonized the state between 1550 and 1580, naming it New Extremadura after a region in Spain. They later changed the name to Coahuila. Colonization of the state was impeded by the vast desert, extreme weather and shortage of water. After much of the indigenous population was wiped out, leaving the northern part of Mexico largely unpopulated, the Spaniards brought Tlaxalteco Indians from south-central Mexico to settle the area and work the land. The state of Texas was part of the Mexican State, Coahuila y Tejas before declaring independence in 1835.



Stenocactus multicastratus

Partial list of cactus species native to Coahuila:

Ariocarpus fissuratus, *A. kotschoubeyanus*, *Astrophytum capricorne*, *A. coahuilense*, *A. myriacanthum*, *Coryphantha bonwigi*, *C. gladiolifera*, *C. palmari*, *C. paucispina*, *C. werdermannii*, *Echinocereus conglomeratus*, *E. delsettii*, *E. ernestianus*, *E. knippsianus*, *E. merkeri*, *E. niveus*, *E. pectinatus*, *Echinomastus mariposensis*, *Epithelantha micromeris*, *E. pechyrhiza*, *Eoscebia equitarsis*, *E. esperiana*, *E. dearycantha*, *E. jaredoi*, *E. roseana*, *E. ziziana*, *Gymnocactus bequithii*, *Lophophora williamsii*, *Mammillaria albimaculata*, *M. chionocephala*, *M. gracilis*, *M. loria*, *M. pennispinosa*, *M. plurica*, *M. potii*, *M. roseana*, *Opuntia bradleyana*, *O. irrubescens*, *O. kleinii*, *O. leptocaulis*, *O. moelleri*, *O. phaeantha*, *O. rufica*, *O. schottii*, *Stenocactus multicastratus*, *Thelocactus bicolor*, *Turbinocephalus veldezerus*

-Manny Rivera

Edited by Kyle Williams. Photos: C. T. Johansson, M. A. Arroyo, & Peter Mansfield

Crassula

Crassula is a large genus of approximately 300 species of succulents with a worldwide distribution. It belongs to the **Crassulaceae**, a family of leafy succulents that includes **Adromischus**, **Aeonium**, **Cotyledon**, **Dudleya**, **Echeveria**, **Kalanchoe**, **Sedum**, and several other ornamental genera. The largest number of **Crassula** species, including nearly all cultivated ones, are from Africa (especially the eastern Cape of South Africa). However, right here in California we have three native species: **Crassula aquatica**, **C. connata**, & **C. silleri**. Unfortunately these species are small and weedy, and therefore not ideal for cultivation. **Crassula aquatica** has the rare distinction of being an aquatic succulent! It seems like an oxymoron, but plants don't have to follow our rules! In fact, it often grows in vernal pools that dry out in the summer so its succulent nature allows it to survive later in the summer than other plants in that habitat.



Crassula auserensis ssp. titanopsis



Crassula is distinguished from the most of the rest of the family by having as many stamens as petals, and having opposite leaves. Other African members of the **Crassulaceae** have twice as many stamens as petals. Depending on the species, **Crassula** can range from being a tiny herb less only an inch or two high (e.g. **C. auserensis**) to a large shrub like the common Jade Plant (**C. ovata**).

The genus runs the gamut from beginner plants that are virtually indestructible to difficult winter growers that are intolerant of water in the summer, but at the same time prone to drying up if insufficient moisture isn't provided. Therefore it is imperative that you look up the cultural conditions for your particular plant as there is no singular bit of cultural advice that can cover all **Crassula**. That being said, there are some generalities that cover most cultivated **Crassula**. They are usually winter growers. They start growth in October, grow until

the days get too short, sit out the worst of the winter, and then grow again until the weather warms in the early summer. Most are dormant during the summer, or would prefer to be. This works well in our wet winter, dry summer climate.

Propagation of almost all **Crassula** species is most easily done by vegetative offsets. Cuttings should be taken when the plants are in active growth, early spring being best, left to dry for a day or two, and then simply potted in the same mix as the original plant. Rooting is almost always rapid and new growth appears in a week or two. Many species can be started from leaf cuttings so long as you include the base of the leaf where it attaches to the stem. Propagation from seed is possible but can be surprisingly difficult. Plant seed planted in October or November. Germination is sporadic, and keeping the young seedlings alive is often a challenge.



Crassula arborescens

-Kyle Williams

Special thanks to Tom Glavich

Photo Credits: Kyle Williams, H. Kristinsson, Poco a Poco

We have two new books appropriate for the hot, dry weather we have been having. When describing a desert plant, we usually picture the majestic Saguaro but there are two very different genera that typify the reality of the dry, hot, “barren” plant life of the desert.

The first book is “*Echinocactus*” by Davide Donati and Carlo Zanovello. A true cactophile will see the beauty of this dangerous-looking bundle of very pointed spines while most people will ignore this plant as being just another boring dangerous-looking cactus. The authors will dispel this image with a brief discussion of the taxonomic history of *Echinocactus*, followed by several pages regarding geographical distribution, ecology and traditional uses. The plant descriptions are featured with a blue background (to make locating them easier –(nice touch) and include information on stems, roots, ribs, areoles, flowers, fruit and seeds. Then, a feature seldom found in our books: recipes for *Mermelada de acitron* (jelly) and *Dulces de visnaga* (candied pulp). Something for everyone... Preceding the plant descriptions is another entertaining feature - a short story about their trips.

The second book, “*The Genus Fouquieria*” by Robert Scott is a wonderful recognition of another plant we usually ignore. Most of us are familiar with *F. splendens*, aka Ocotillo. “There are others?” you say.... The author describes all eleven species with basic information about plant size, flower color, native habitat, distribution maps, etc. Photos comparing/contrasting leaves, stems, flowers, and plant shape are very helpful for ease of identification. Check out the photo credits – some names will be familiar! Mr. Scott is also very considerate of us who have difficulty with the long Latin names by providing a pronunciation guide.

Both books could serve well as a field guide but their most important function is to introduce and excite us about plants that are often overlooked. So, on our next field trip, make sure we don’t just walk around these beauties but we can walk up to them and say “I know about this one!!”

It’s difficult to believe that we only have two months left this year to avail ourselves of the great selections in our Library. So, make sure you step right up and

CHECK IT OUT!!

See you soon,
Joyce the Librarian

EXTRA EXTRA
READ ALL ABOUT IT!!

Our Library now has over 200 titles. Some titles have duplicate books. To maximize our storage space the Board of Directors has agreed to make available to our members some of the duplicate books. **Here is your opportunity to add some of the classic titles that you have always wanted to your book collection at a reasonable cost!** Throughout the coming year, additional books will be offered to the membership, including selected CSSA Journals.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact Joyce, the Librarian.

A silent auction will be held at the October meeting, come to the Library Table to place your bid. The following titles are up for auction:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
<i>The Cactaceae Volume 1 & 2 and Volume 3 & 4 (2 book set)</i>	Britton and Rose
<i>The Agave Family in Sonora</i>	Howard Gentry
<i>The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Cacti and Other Succulents</i>	Řiha and Šubík
<i>The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Succulents and Cacti</i>	Rowley
<i>Dudleya and Hasseanthus Handbook</i>	Paul Thompson



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General Meeting

October 3

Program Title: Nature and Cacti from Patagonia

By: Guillermo Rivera

No Scheduled Sales or Events for October 2013

November 2 & 3 San Gabriel Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale
9:00 AM-5PM LA County Arboretum
301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA

December LACSS Holiday Party