



# Prickly News

South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Newsletter - January 2014

## GENERAL MEETING

Sunday - January 12 , 1:30 pm

We will meet in the Hall

### "The Big Five"

Presentation by Petra Crist,  
Owner of Rare Succulents

Petra Crist will be speaking on "The Big Five" at our meeting this month. She has visited South Africa several times. Come and find out what the "Big Five" are. She specializes in growing our succulents of the month and will probably bring some for sale as she currently has a nursery in Fallbrook and frequently sells at local shows. So if you don't have any of them yet, come see what they are and find out how to grow them from her. She is very passionate about these showy South African plants.



## REFRESHMENTS FOR JANUARY

Many thanks to all who brought fine food and drink to our annual Holiday Party. It was a great success!

Volunteers for January refreshments are:

Danny Westall  
Carol Causey

If you would like bring something to our next meeting, please feel free to do so – thanks!

**Kitchen Volunteers** – Please see Carol Causey after the meeting if you would like to help with kitchen cleanup.

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## President's Message

I hope your Christmas was merry and I wish you, your loved ones, and all your plants a happy "green" New Year. We had a terrific turnout — 58 members attended our Holiday Potluck. The classroom worked out fine – by putting chairs on both sides of the 15 tables, I don't think anyone

felt cramped; at least no one said anything to me. The table and room decorations were wonderful. I especially want to acknowledge **Maria Capaldo** and **Bernard Johnson** for the tablecloths and Maria for the succulents on the tables. And thank you **Ana & Robert Mackenzie** for the live juniper boughs and room decorations. **Snow Dunn** brought the holly berries, and **Rita Mason, Rose Arbuckle, Irene Rich, Sally Fasteau** and **David Quadhamer** all helped with the setup that truly enhanced the holiday spirit. I extend kudos to **Bernard Johnson** and **Danny Westall** for cooking the ribs and ham and there were so many side dishes I was unable to sample them all - sigh. They all looked so delicious and wholesome. I wish I had a list of everyone who brought in dishes and the name of the dish. Maybe next year we could label the dishes with that information, but I said that last year, didn't I? Special thanks to **Carol Causey** for bringing order out of chaos in the kitchen and **Danny Westall** for keeping the coffee pots full; and everyone who pitched in before and after. And thank you **Maria** for relieving me of responsibility for orchestrating the event.

You are aware (or should be if you come to meetings or read the Newsletter) that we are adding an Intermediate class to the mini-show in January. The Board hopes this change will encourage members who are new to the hobby to participate. I certainly hope so. I've been told that some of you are intimidated and don't feel knowledgeable enough to participate. Well, this mini-show is exactly why you should participate. Remember we are a scientific society and our motto is "**Learn Facts, make Friends, and have Fun**". So next year we will try to spend a little more time discussing the novice entries and suggest ways to grow or show the plants better. If you have ideas along this line, please contact me.

Making changes is usually a good thing. It keeps organizations from becoming moribund. But making changes requires initiative, work, flexibility, and most of all your involvement.

Dale La Forest  
President





## Event Reminder:

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens  
 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino, CA 91108  
 626) 405-2100

## DESERT FORUM

Saturday, 18 January 2014

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 9:00 – 10:00 Registration
- 9:00 – 11:00 Desert Garden  
 Knowledgeable staff will be stationed throughout the Desert Garden and Desert Conservatory  
 Aloes will be flowering
- 11:00 – 1:00 Plant Sales  
 Gate opens by the Teaching Greenhouse at 11:00 for plant sales – please, no early bird shopping  
 Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted
- 11:00-1:00 Duke Benadom book-signing of Superb Succulents in the Teaching Greenhouse
- 1:00 – 4:30 Free Time  
 Attendees are welcome to tour the gardens and galleries

Don't miss:  
 "Beautiful Science: Ideas that Changed the World" in Dibner Hall (Library building)  
 The newly renovated Japanese Garden  
 Liu Fang Yuan, the Garden of Flowing Fragrance (Chinese Garden)



### 2014 PLANTS OF THE MONTH (POM)

	Cactus	Succulents
January	<b>Mammillaria straight spines</b>	<b>Adenia, Cissus and Cyphostemma</b>
February	Rebutia	Sansevieria
March	Gymnocalycium	Crassula
April	PLANT SHOW AND SALE	
May	Stenocactus	Gasteria
June	Crests / Monstrose	Echeveria
July	Ferocactus	Agave / Yucca
August	Coryphantha	Mesembs
September	Ariocarpus	Haworthia
October	Cactus dish gardens	Succulent dish gardens
November	Erioseye	Winter Bulbs
December	HOLIDAY PARTY	



## CACTUS OF THE MONTH – MAMMILLARIA STRAIGHT SPINES

There are around 300 species of Mammillarias. Most are native to Mexico, some are native from southwestern USA, Caribbean, Central America, or even a couple in northern South America. In their range you can find Mammillarias from sea level to high elevations. They also vary in size from miniature 1 inch in diameter (2.5 cm), to columnar types 1 foot tall (30 cm).

The name Mammillaria comes from the Latine for “nipple”, because the areolas (structures carrying the spines) are carried by nipple like structures instead of being organized in ribs like many other cacti. Another significant difference is that the flowers are not coming from the areola, but from the area at the juncture of 2 tubercles.

As could be expected from so many species, their growing requirements are quite varied. Many species are easy and fast to grow and to get to bloom while young, this is why they are very popular. Some are quite hardy while others will rot easily if kept too cold. All of them require excellent drainage. This is more easily accomplished by using a good cactus soil mixture, and using a shallow pot.

In general the Mammillarias bloom easily, but many species need a rest period in winter during which they are kept cool in order to bloom. Furthermore flowers form a ring on tissue grown the previous growing season, so it is important to get them to grow every year, which means regular watering and fertilizing during their growing period.



*Mammillaria compressa*



*Mammillaria carmena*

*Mammillaria kladiwa*



*Mammillaria multisetata*

*Mammillaria geminispina*



*Mammillaria wagneriana*

## SUCCULENTS OF THE MONTH – ADENIA, CISUS AND CYPHSTEMMA

**Adenia** is not to be mistaken for adenIUM. Although they are both caudiciform and are both named for the city of Aden in Yemen, they belong to different botanical families. Adenia is a member of the Passiflora or Passion Flower family.

Adenias are popular for their swollen woody stem. This type of stem is called a caudex. Adenias form fairly large and decorative ones. Since the caudex is the main attraction, these plants are propagated mostly by seeds since the cuttings, although they strike easily and bloom earlier, rarely produce a caudex.

In cultivation the sprawling stems are regularly pruned to keep the plant good looking in a pot (as well as transportable). All of the Adenia are cold sensitive, particularly when young, and should never be exposed to cold and damp.

The sap of Adenia is poisonous, and they should be handled with caution, particularly when pruning.

**Cissus** is a large genus in the grape family of approximately 350 species. In the 1980's the genus was split according to some details of the flower, and the large caudiciform species were moved to the genus Cyphostemma. What is left in cissus are mostly vining species native of tropical and subtropical areas.

The flowers typical of the grape family are green and insignificant. They produce fruit shaped as small grapes. Many of the species have poisonous fruit. Most species cannot take any frost.

**Cyphostemma** is a member of the Vitaceae or grape family and used to belong to the genus Cissus. The members of this genus span the range of extremely easy to grow plants to real challenges. Most of the species will grow large, given time, good root room, lots of fertilizer, and water during the growing season. Most Cyphostemma will set fruit. In almost all cases, the fruit is toxic to humans and most pets, although freely eaten by birds. The seeds in the fruit are ripe when the fruit turns color (usually red).

The key to success with these plants is to pay attention to the native habitat. *Cyphostemma juttae*, common in many collections, comes from South Africa. It takes some frost with no damage, and grows in the ground in Southern California, putting on bulk and character in just a few years.

Propagation is easy from cuttings and seeds. Seed of all the common and even some of the truly rare species is sometimes available through the CSSA or through some of the better South African and US seed dealers. Germination is erratic (days to months), and only one seed should be sown per pot. The seedling mix should be sterile and organic, and hold a lot of water. Scarring the seeds to allow water penetration helps. The seeds should be completely buried to provide uniform moisture. A plastic bag over the mix will help keep everything uniform. The bag should be removed as soon as any sign of green appears, the seedling leaves are large, and will rot if they touch the plastic. Softwood cuttings should be taken when active growth is occurring. Rooting does not require or even seem to benefit from hormones.

Tom Glavich July 2004



*Adenia globosa*



*Adenia glauca*



*Adenia stenodactyla*



*Adenia pechuelii*



*Cissus tuberosa*



*Cissus rhombifolia*



*Cissus antarctica*



*Cyphostemma currori*



*Cissus hypoglauca*



*Cyphostemma bainesii*



*Cissus trifoliata*



*Cissus striata*



## JANUARY'S PRESENTER: PETRA CRIST

### “The Big 5”

In Africa that usually refers to the big animal: Lion, Elephant, Buffalo, Leopard and Rhinoceros. For me – in the plant world – that means *Cyphostemma juttae*, *uter*, *curorii*, *bainesii* and *seitziana* (the latter two sometimes being considered one and the same species). *Cyphostemmas* are in the grape family – Vitacea and are considered a succulent grape. Fruits / seeds are not really edible mainly due to their extremely high oxalic acid content.

A little bio: Still in Germany, I always had some cacti and succulents, but little did I know about them, except that they fascinated me somehow. When I moved to California, almost 20 years ago, I almost immediately started collecting and at the same time started learning a bit more about these plants. My first exposure was at the Intercity show in 1994. I will never forget when I opened the door and saw all these plants. When we left, my husband made “the biggest mistake of his life” – he took me to the Huntington Botanical Garden. At first collecting started out gradually but after a while, it took on a life of its own. One day I was at a show – not yet showing – and talked to a lady in the sales area whom I proudly told that I had about a hundred plants. The Lady just laughed at me and told me to wait till it was a thousand and more. At this point I laughed and later on told my husband about this “crazy” woman. Well, I am not laughing any longer and have exceeded the thousand quite a while ago – I am the crazy one now, I guess. The Lady, by the way, was Norma Lewis.

Things got “worse” when I became a member of the San Gabriel Cactus and Succulent Society. I immediately “fell” into the hands of some very serious collectors whose knowledge and experience I still greatly profit from today. They got me into showing my plants. I always could ask then all these questions I had. Today I am a member of several clubs and I



*The picture is me standing beside *Cyphostemma curorii* at the nursery.*

am still as excited about these plants as I was in the beginning – or even more so.

I started a business buying and selling succulents, and my business name is Rare Succulents. [www.rare-succulents.com](http://www.rare-succulents.com). I collect and grow mainly Succulents and here mainly caudiciforms and pachycauls. Otherwise I still am not specialized in any kind of family and/or genus and interests are still changing from time to time – not that I have made up my mind yet about anything – in my opinion they are all way tooooooo interesting. As I already mentioned, these plants changed my life quite a bit. For more than 40 years I was a horse person, riding dressage, showing, breeding, brokering and importing dressage horses. Now I am living a dream come true for the past 4 ½ years with acquiring a 4 acre piece of land in Rainbow, California (Northern San Diego County). A very exhausting and time consuming dream but well worth it for me. If you go to my website and click on the big picture on my home page, you will see a blog my husband maintains and updates from the beginning till almost now and you can see the property developing to what it is now.

I was also fortunate enough to travel to Africa with my husband several times and saw some of the plants that so fascinate me in their natural environment.

Petra Crist

Rare Succulents

*Exotic Specimen Plants from the Old World.*

*“A unique resource for the discriminating collector.”*

Tel 562-618-7250, by app. only.

Web: [www.rare-succulents.com](http://www.rare-succulents.com)

email: [info@rare-succulents.com](mailto:info@rare-succulents.com)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS for FY2013-2014

#### Officers

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#### Standing Committee Chairmen

*Show & Sale Chair*

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#### At Large Members

**Dale La Forest**

**Maria Capaldo**

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**Gary Duke**

**Jim Hanna**

**Anita Caplan**

**Sally Fasteau**

**Lynda Johnson**

**Laurel Woodley**

**Mike Short**

**Bob Caplan**

# CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2014

(updated 11/12/2013)

- FEB 8 SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY, SPRING SHOW AND SALE  
BALBOA PARK, ROOM 101, SAN DIEGO, CA—INFO: 858-382-1797
- MAR. 28-30 ORANGE COUNTY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SHOW AND SALE.  
FRI. AND SAT. MAR. 28-29 9-5PM SUN. MAR. 30th 12-4PM  
1000 S. State College Bl., (Anaheim United Methodist Church) Anaheim, CA  
INFO: 562-587-3357
- APR 12-13 SOUTH COAST CACTUS AN SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW & SALE  
SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN, 26300 CRENSHAW BLVD., PALOS VERDES, CA  
INFO: 310-378-1953
- APR 19-20 GREEN SCENE PLANT SALE—AT THE FULLERTON ARBORETUM  
1900 ASSOCIATED ROAD, FULLERTON, CA 92831
- APR 27 HUNTINGTON PLANT SALE 10 TO 5  
HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS, 1151 OXFORD ROAD, SAN MARINO, CA.  
INFO: 626-405-2160
- MAY 4 SOUTH BAY EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE—9am to 4pm  
SOUTH COAST BOTANICAL GARDENS  
INFO: 310-833-6823
- May 3 & 4 SUNSET CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE  
VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER, GARDEN ROOM  
4117 OVERLAND AVE., CULVER CITY, CA. INFO.  
INFO: 310-822-1783
- MAY 16-17 GATES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY  
33rd SHOW AND SALE FRI & SAT 9-4:30 pm  
INFO: 951-360-8802
- MAY 17-18 LONG BEACH CACTUS CLUB PLANT SHOW AND SALE 10AM-5PM  
RANCHO LOS ALAMITOS, 6400 BIXBY HILL ROAD, LONG BEACH  
INFO: 310-922-6090—www.lbcss.org
- MAY 24-25 CENTRAL COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW & SALE (10-4PM),  
LUDWICK CENTER, 864 SANTA ROSA, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA –  
INFO: 805-237-2054, www.centralcoastcactus.org
- JUNE 7-8 SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY –SUMMER SHOW AND SALE  
BALBOA PARK, ROOM 101, SAN DIEGO, CA.  
INFO: 858-382-1797
- JUNE 14-15 LOS ANGELES CACTUS and SUCCULENT SOCIETY  
PLANT SHOW AND SALE 14TH 9-5, 15th 9-3:30  
SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER, 16633 MAGNOLIA BLVD.  
ENCINO, CA INFO. E-MAIL www.lacss-show.com
- JUNE 27-29 CSSA ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE –HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS  
1151 OXFORD ROAD, SAN MARINO, CA.  
INFO: 626-405-2160 or 2277  
PLANTS SALES START JUNE 27TH THRU JUNE 29TH  
THE SHOW OPENS ON THE JUNE 28TH THRU JUNE 29TH  
FREE TO THE PUBLIC
- JULY 25-27 ORANGE COUNTY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SUMMER SHOW AND  
SALE. FRI. JULY 25TH 9am-5pm, SAT JULY 26TH 9am-5pm, SUN 27TH 12-4pm  
1000 S. State College Bl., (Anaheim United Methodist Church) Anaheim, CA  
INFO: 949-212-8417
- AUG. 9-10 29th ANNUAL INTERCITY SHOW AND SALE AT THE LA COUNTY ARBORETUM,  
9am-5pm daily. 301 NO. BALDWIN AVE., ARCADIA, CA.  
INFO: CALL TOM GLAVICH 626-798-2430 or JOHN MATTHEWS 661-714-1052
- AUG 30 HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM  
ALL DAY AT THE HUNTINGTON
- SEPT. 7 LONG BEACH CACTUS CLUB ANNUAL PLANT AUCTION -12-5PM  
RANCHO LOS ALAMITOS, 6400 BIXBY HILL ROAD, LONG BEACH, CA 90615  
INFO: 310-922-6090
- NOV. 1 & 2 SAN GABRIEL CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY 9am-4pm both days  
SHOW AND SALE—LA COUNTY ARBORETUM ADDRESS ABOVE



## *Love California Gardens?*



# **AWARD OPPORTUNITIES**

*for South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society members*

California Garden Clubs (CGCI) invites you to register for its annual competition for monetary and certificate awards.

### Categories include

- Backyard Habitat (C-10)
- Unique Backyard Enhancements (C-11)
- Photography, Section 2 – Cacti (G-10)
- Horticulture Excellence in Gardening (HT-6)
- Outstanding Private Garden Award (P.61)
- Landscape Design Commendation
- Botanic Gardens Photography (G-17)
- Memorial Planting Award (HT-2)

### Details

- Awards Year – January 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>
- Eligibility – All Members of the South Coast Cacti and Succulent Society
- Form – available from the website at [California Garden Clubs.org](http://CaliforniaGardenClubs.org).
- Details for each category – on the website or contact Lynda Johnson @310-324-3304
- Deadline – December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014