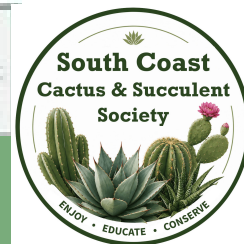


Prickly News



July
2026

South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Newsletter



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MEETINGS: We have the following meeting dates and locations:

Hesse Community Park,

Sunday July 12 1:00-4:00 pm

Sunday August 9 1:00-4:00pm

Peninsula Library, Sunday September 13 2:00-4:00pm,

I am sorry that we cannot get a consistent meeting place. Refer to our website for meeting locations and times.

BYLAWS: Our Society Bylaws have been revised to reflect some changes in function. They are published on our website at this link:

<https://southcoastcss.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/2026-amended-Bylaws-Master-2026-06-18.pdf>.

Or go to the "About Us" page and click the Bylaws link. We will be holding a vote to approve them at our next meeting so please review them and send me any concerns.

BULBS: We enjoyed an interesting and informative presentation by Ernesto Sandoval at our last meeting on bulbs and he shared some dependable websites for purchasing bulbs: telosrarebulbs.com and Pacificbulbsociety.org.

THE MINI-SHOW: Plants for July are *Melocactus* and Succulent Bromeliads (excluding *Dyckia* and *Hechtia*.) Only the following succulent Bromeliads will be accepted in the Mini-Show: *Acanthostachys*, *Aechmea*, *Ananas*, *Bromelia*, *Cryptanthus*, *Deuterochonia*, *Orthophytum*, *Puya*, and *Tillandsia*.

PRESENTATION: I'm excited to have Jeff Chemnick join us from Santa Barbara. He is well-travelled, knowledgeable and always has so much information to share about the succulent world.

I hope to see you there!

Maria Capaldo

South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Meeting

July 12, 2026 1:00pm-4:00pm

Fred Hesse Jr. Community Park

McTaggart Hall

29301 Hawthorne Blvd

Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Presentation



Jeff Chemnick
"Seldom Seen
Succulents and
More"



To learn more, go to
<https://southcoastcss.org>



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Presentation: "Seldom Seen Succulents and More"*Jacaratia mexicana* from Mexico

Jeff will present interesting, mostly succulent, plants and blooms from around the world that are not often seen in slide shows. We will visit Mexico, South Africa, Madagascar, Namibia, Australia, Borneo, Chile, and Colombia during our virtual tour.

*Cavanillesia chicamochae* from Colombia**Biography:**

Jeff's passion for growing plants began as a teenager and now manifests itself in a nursery/garden open by appointment called Aloes in Wonderland, with 4.5 acres of cultivated grounds and greenhouses in the foothills of Santa Barbara. Jeff's garden features specimen plants of aloes, cycads, agaves, cactus, bromeliads, yuccas, dracaenas, cyphostemmas, brachychitons, euphorbias, palms, ceibas, and many other enticing plant groups.

Jeff has had a 30-year relationship with Santa Barbara's amazing botanic garden, Ganna Walska Lotusland. He is a Research Associate, Cycad Lecturer, Plant and Collections Committee Chair, and Auctioneer for the annual Exceptional Plant Sale. A lifelong cycad enthusiast, Jeff has been actively engaged in field work, studying the cycads of Mexico since the 1970's. Jeff and his colleagues have authored eight cycad species new to science, and he is a member of the IUCN Cycad Specialist Group.

July 2026

Mini-Show Plant of the Month Cactus

*Melocactus azureus**Melocactus intortus**Melocactus matanzanus**Melocactus Zehntneri*

Melocactus are immediately recognizable by the large cephalium that develops on mature plants. *Melocactus* grow as normal appearing, but flowerless, globular cacti until they reach maturity. This can take from six to fifteen years in cultivation, with a greater range in habitat. Once they reach maturity, the body stops growing vigorously (it still grows slowly). Most of the plant energy goes into producing a cylindrical flowering and fruiting structure known as a cephalium. This is usually white, with short hairs of yellow, orange or red. As the years go by, the cephalium becomes more cylindrical, with the base becoming more colorful. The flowers are usually a red-purple, and the fruits are almost always a bright red to attract birds. With age, the cephalium can grow to 18 inches or more in height.

Melocactus are native to a large region, Brazil to Southern Mexico, including a good part of the Caribbean. As might be expected, cacti from the tropical regions, particularly coastal regions are sensitive to cold and wet. Cold and wet conditions can cause scarring of the body, which usually appears as brown or tan lesions on the skin. A few of these are unavoidable, but a badly scarred plant quickly becomes unsightly. At the same time, almost all of the *Melocactus* expect high humidity and a higher moisture level than might be expected. Many grow within sight of the ocean, or in some of the more tropical and humid regions of Brazil. They like water, but demand good drainage.

Melocactus are generally solitary, so the only means of propagation is through seeds. Fortunately they produce plenty of seed, and these germinate readily, particularly when the weather is warm. Keep the seedlings protected from direct sun, and moist until fairly large. It takes several years from seed to a flowering plant.

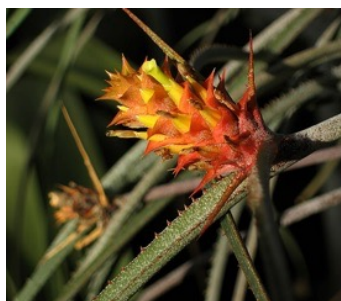
[Ed: The following is the abstract from an interesting article in *Biotropica* Vol. 26, No. 3 (Sep., 1994), pp. 295-301. Where "Saurocory" means seed dispersal.]

Saurocory in *Melocactus violaceus* (Cactaceae)

The button cactus, *Melocactus violaceus* (Cactaceae), occurs in open, sandy soils in southern Brazilian coastal areas. The fruits of this species are pink, cone-shaped, and have a high water content and low sugar concentration. The fruits of *M. violaceus* develop while completely protected inside the cephalium and are driven out by internal pressure when ripe. Fruits can be exposed in only a few minutes during the hottest part of the day, and they become easily visible over the cephalium. They are expelled more quickly when temperature is high and lizards are more active. During the dry season these fruits appear to be eaten exclusively by the lizard *Tropidurus torquatus* (Tropiduridae). The cephalium is positioned close to soil level and the bright color of the fruits apparently improves fruit detection. Lizards defecate viable *M. violaceus* seeds. These seeds germinated quickly under laboratory conditions, while seeds collected directly from ripe fruits did not germinate under the same conditions. Cactus and fruit morphology, and the diurnal pattern of fruit release, may represent a suite of adaptations for dispersal by *Tropidurus torquatus*.

July 2026

Mini-Show Plant of the Month Succulent

*Acanthostachys strobilacea**Ananas comosus*
var. *bracteatus**Aechmea recurvata**Bromelia laciniosa***Succulent Bromeliad:**

NOTE: Only plants in the following genera will be accepted at the Mini-Show ...

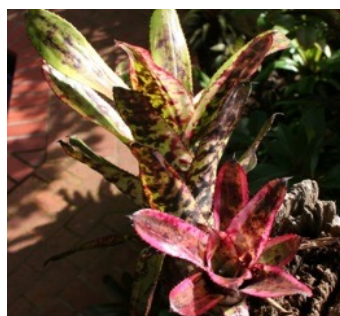
Acanthostachys, *Aechmea*, *Ananas*, *Bromelia*, *Cryptanthus*, *Deuterochonia*, *Orthophytum*, *Puya*, and *Tillandsia*. Succulent bromeliads are those that have adapted to arid conditions through the ability to store water.

The Bromeliads, like Cacti and Agavaceae are a New World family. Like the Cacti they have evolved to cover a range of environments, from the coastal mountains of Chile, to the plains of Argentina, to the Amazon, the dry scrub and montane forests of Brazil, all of Central America and Mexico, the off-shore islands, and even the temperate regions of Argentina and the United States.

There are at least three regions where gradual climatic change forced some Bromeliad genera (and some species of other genera) to become succulent. The best known of the succulent genera are *Puya*, which are mostly Andean plants, and the *Tillandsia*, which inhabit regions from Virginia to Argentina. However there are some spectacular succulents in other genera as well.

Aechmea are prized for their striking foliage and long-lasting flower spikes. They hail from Mexico to the tropical Americas. These bromeliads are usually very easy to grow in bright sun or dappled shade (depending on the species). Most species are tank-forming epiphytes, meaning that they grow attached to tree limbs and trunk and collect water in the vase formed by their leaves. As houseplants, they are tolerant of dry air and occasionally dry roots as long as the central tank is kept full of water. Water and liquid fertilizer (diluted to half-strength) should be applied to the central tank, allowing any overflow to trickle down into the root ball. The potting mix should be well-draining. A special, bark-based orchid mix is good, or a light, well-draining houseplant mix will work. Do not allow the root ball to remain in soggy soil. After the plant flowers, it will produce offsets at its base. They can be separated from the mother plant when they are about one-third of the mother's size. After the flowering plant produces offsets, it will die. Propagation is by division of the rhizome, or by seeds.

Orthophytum is a less known genus with a significant number of succulent species. This genus comes from Brazil, and the genus for the most part occupies a warm and humid environment. Many of the *Orthophytum* are spectacularly flocked with special cells (trichomes) that pull moisture directly out of the air. Bands of trichome rich and trichome poor regions on the leaves give these plants a spectacular coloring. As with *Dyckia*, there are a wealth of hybrids, with many be created in Florida, which is really more to their liking than the dry inner valleys of California.

*Aechmea orlandiana**Aechmea* 'Blue Tango'*Orthophytum gurkenii*

July 2026

Mini-Show Plant of the Month Succulent

*Ananas comosus**Cryptanthus bivittatus**Deuterocohnia lorentziana**Deuterocohnia brevifolia**Puya mirabilis*

Puya is another succulent genus, largely in the Andes, and with the largest number of species on the Western side of the mountains. Many of the *Puya* species are gigantic, some reaching tree-like dimensions before flowering. Others can be kept in a pot, at least for a few years. Many *Puya* have leaves that carry seedling leaf impressions, much like the *Agave*.

Deuterocohnia (= *Abromeiteilla*) is also popular.

Members of this genus are found in Argentina and Bolivia. The multiple small rosettes form spreading mounds. If they are grown in enough light, the rosettes are very tight and at some of the shows there are often large dome shaped specimens. In the wild, they can grow over and on rocks. The readily available species are:

D. brevifolia grows outdoors at the Huntington Botanical Garden and forms a nice mound about 3 feet across. The triangular leaves have margins that are spineless. The flowers are tubular in shape and greenish in color.

D. brevifolia subs. *chlorantha* is an even smaller species with rosettes only 30 mm across. The leaves have a small terminal spine and the leaf margins have tiny teeth. This is the smallest of all terrestrial bromeliads.

D. lorentziana is a larger growing species but similar to the above.

Tillandsia is a genus of around 650 species of perennials. Also known as “Air Plants” because most are epiphytic which means “living on another plant” mostly hanging in trees, although they will hang on to anything they can, even rocks. Some are aerophytes having a minimal root system where they grow on shifting desert sand. They are native to the forests, mountains and deserts of Southeastern United States and Northern Mexico, and from the Caribbean south to Central Argentina. Their leaves carry cells (trichomes) capable of quickly absorbing water that falls on them.

Many species of *Tillandsia* prefer to live in a humid climate such as a rain forest or one where there is coastal fog. Flowers are usually bright and are in a variety of colors. Pollinators include moths, hummingbirds, and bats.

Tillandsia usneoides is commonly known as “Spanish Moss”. They are capable of performing crassulacean acid metabolism (Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crassulacean_acid_metabolism) so they are considered succulents.

*Puya venusta**Puya venusta*

Mini-Show Winners June 2026

Cactus



1st- Terri Straub
Austrocyllindropuntia subulata

2nd-Phyllis De Crescenzo
Opuntia monacantha variegated
2nd- Terri Straub *Tephrocactus articulatus*
3rd- Phyllis DeCrescenzo
Opuntia gosseliniana
3rd- Maria Capaldo
Tephrocactus articulatus

Open

Succulent



1st - Phyllis DeCrescenzo

Euphorbia enopla
2nd - Maria Capaldo *Euphorbia polygona*
2nd - Terri Straub *Euphorbia mammillaris*
3rd - Terri Straub *Euphorbia grandicornis*
3rd - Terri Straub *Euphorbia stellata*

Intermediate



1st - Mike Short *Opuntia monacantha*, monstrose

2nd - Vincent Darmali *Opuntia*
2nd - Anita Caplan *Opuntia*, variegated
3rd - Vincent Darmali *Tephrocactus articulatus*



**1st - Mike Short *Euphorbia polygona*
'Snowflake'**

2nd - Anita Caplan *Euphorbia stellata*
2nd - Mike Short *Euphorbia stellata*
3rd - Anita Caplan *Euphorbia heptagona*
3rd - Vincent Darmali *Euphorbia polygona*
'Snowflake'

Mini-Show Winners June 2026

Cactus



1st - Gustavo and Denise Cardenas
Tephrocactus geometricus

2nd - Chris Schavwecker
Tephrocactus geometricus

2nd - Chris Schavwecker
Tephrocactus articulatus

3rd - Chris Schavwecker
Tephrocactus aoracanthus

Novice



1st - Debra Galliani *Euphorbia globosa*

2nd - Debra Galliani *Euphorbia mammillaris*

Mini-Show Standings June 2026

Novice Class	Cactus	Succulents	Totals	Intermediate Class	Cactus	Succulents	Totals	Open Class	Cactus	Succulents	Totals
Martha Bjerke		9	9	Anita Caplan	9	13	22	Maria Capaldo	9	14	23
Gustavo Cardenas	14	27	41	Vincent Darmali	14	24	38	Phyllis DeCrescenzo	45	29	74
Debra Galliani	10	4	14	Sally Fasteau		6	6	Gary Duke	10	10	20
Anna Salas		1	1	Lemona Lott		17	17	Jim Gardner	14	33	47
Chris Schavwecker	10		10	Mike Short	7	14	21	Jim Hanna		5	5
Warren Woodrum	6	2	8					Terri Straub	24	25	49
Liz Ying	11	10	21					Laurel Woodley		5	5

Mini-Show Calendar 2026-2027

Month	Cactus	Succulent
JULY	<i>Melocactus</i>	Succulent <i>Bromeliaceae</i> (other than <i>Dyckia</i> , <i>Hechtia</i>)
AUGUST	<i>Copiapoa</i>	<i>Graptopetalum</i> , <i>Graptoveria</i> , <i>Pachyria</i>
SEPTEMBER	<i>Notocactus</i> , <i>Parodia</i>	<i>Sedum</i> , <i>Pachyphytum</i> , <i>Sempervivum</i> , <i>Graptosedum</i>
OCTOBER	<i>Ariocarpus</i> , <i>Obregonia</i>	<i>Adenium</i> , <i>Adenia</i>
NOVEMBER	Crested and Monstrose	Crested and Monstrose
DECEMBER	Holiday Pot Luck	Holiday Pot Luck
JANUARY 2027	<i>Mammillaria</i> - Hooked Spines	Caudiciform (<i>Beaucarnia</i> , <i>Calibanus</i> , <i>Dioscorea</i> , <i>Fockea</i> , etc.)
FEBRUARY 2027	<i>Eriosyce</i>	<i>Gasteria</i> and hybrids
March 2027	<i>Echinocereus</i>	<i>Dudleya</i> , <i>Cotyledon</i>
APRIL 2027	Show and Sale	Show and Sale
MAY 2027	<i>Coryphantha</i> , <i>Pelecyphora</i> , <i>Acharagma</i> , <i>Sclerocactus</i>	<i>Crassula</i>
June 2027	<i>Gymnocalycium</i>	<i>Pachypodium</i> , <i>Hoya</i>

Mini-Show Rules

Exhibitors must be Society members and must be present at the meeting in order to receive points. One name representing the same household must be used unless plants are grown separately. Mini-Show coordinator will be consulted if there is any question of entry identity. Any container may be used, including plastic, as long as it is clean. All plants must be groomed and free of pests and disease.

There are two plant categories: 'Cactus' and 'Succulents.' Up to three plants per individual may be entered in each category.

Scoring:
 First Place: 6 points
 Second place: 4 points
 Third place: 2 points
 Placement: all entries that are not disqualified: 1 point.
 An individual plant may be entered only once a year.
 There are three entry classes: 'Novice,' 'Intermediate,' and 'Open.' Only members new to the hobby would be expected to be in the Novice class.

After the November meeting, members' point totals will be reviewed by the Board of the Society.

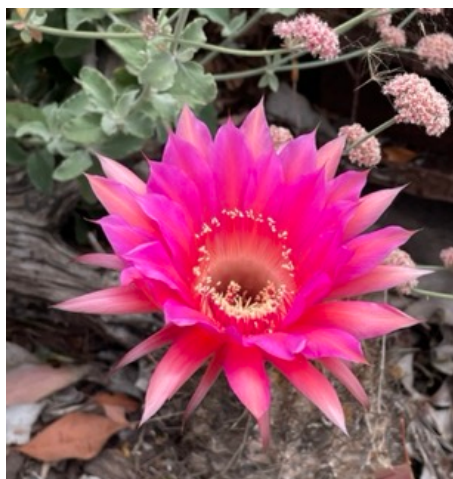
Novice members awarded more than 64 points or winning at least 6 first place awards may be asked to move to the Intermediate class in both categories. Intermediate members awarded more than 64 points or winning at least 6 first place awards, may be asked to begin showing in the Open class.

All plants must be grown by the exhibitor for a minimum of six months for Novice and Intermediate and one year for Open class.

Member Photos

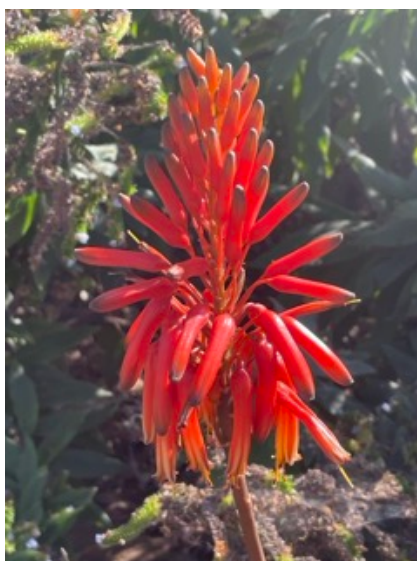


Astrophytum capricorne



Echinopsis hybrid

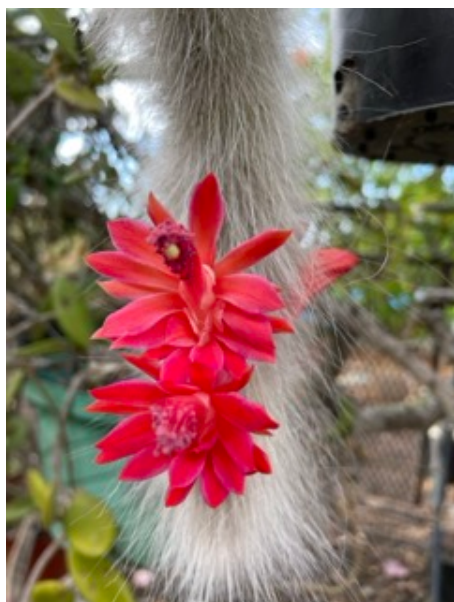
Photos by Debra Galliani



Aloe elgonica.



Aloe distans



Cleistocactus colademononis



Epiphyllum 'Dr. Rudi Dorsch'

Upcoming Events



SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEETING

PRESENTER: Jeff Chemnick
"Seldom Seen Succulents and More"

July 12, 2026 1:00pm-4:00pm
Fred Hesse Jr. Community Park
McTaggart Hall
29301 Hawthorne Blvd
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

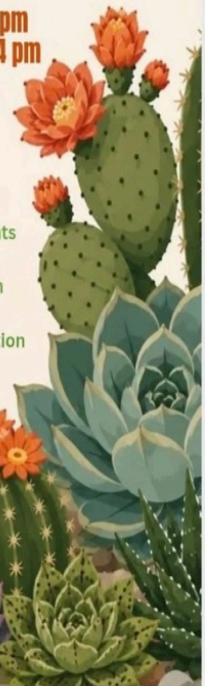
Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society 2026 Summer Sale

Friday July 17: Noon to 6 pm
Saturday July 18: 9 am to 4 pm

Anaheim United Methodist Church
 1000 S. State College Blvd
 Anaheim, CA

Our Vendors!

Botanic Wonders - RDD Succulents
 Desert Creations Nursery - C & D Plants
 East Los Succulents - Hula Tropicals
 Leaf and Spine - Brooke in the Garden
 Pottery By Alden - Prickocereus
 Collecting Succs - LA Cactus Connection
 Somis Succulent Specialties
 Duke's Cactus & Succulents
 Sandy's Haworthia Garden
 Pottery by Patrice
 Partly Sunny Projects
 Rain Shadow Designs
 Orange County Cactus
 Maytag's Pottery
 Succulentplants
 Succy Ceramics
 and many more!!!



For more information and to learn more

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CGCI: Debra Galliani

