Prickly News

November 2026

South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Meetings: We have the following meeting dates and locations:
Fred Hesse Jr. Community Park
Sunday November 8, 1:00-4:00pm

Holiday Pot Luck - PV Art Center
Saturday December 12, 1:00-3:00pm

I spoke with Roberta and Jim Hanna and they are doing well in their new home in the Fresno area. They miss their succulent family and send their regards to all.

Board Elections: Many thanks to Lisa Toler for volunteering to find candidates for elected Board members. We will be voting by acclamation at the next meeting since all are running unopposed. The slate is:

President: Maria Capaldo

Vice-President: Liz Ying

Treasurer: Debra Bushweit Galliani

Secretary: Nancy Sams

At-Large Board Members:

Gustavo Cardenas

Teresa Nicolello

Chris Schavwecker

Thanks to all who agreed to serve on the Board. I thank Linda O'Hara who served as At-Large Board Member during 2026.

Mini-Show: Our Mini-Show Plants of the month are Cactus and Succulent: Crested and Monstrose.

Vendors: If you want to sell at our next meeting, please let me know. At Hesse the tables are set up on the patio outside.

Presentation: Roxie Esterle who is the current CSSA Secretary, will speak on her exploration of the botanical gardens of Europe. I am looking forward to experiencing gardens that I may never see in person. So excited! The presentation will start at 1:30pm.
I hope to see you there.

Maria Capaldo

South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Meeting

November 8, 2026 1:00pm-3:30pm
Fred Hesse Jr. Community Park
McTaggart Hall
29301 Hawthorne Blvd.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275

Presentation



Roxie Esterle "Poking around Europe's Botanical Treasures"

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

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Submitted by Roxie Esterle

2026 NOVEMBER SPEAKER OF THE MONTH

Roxie Esterle "Poking around Europe's Botanical Treasures"



Ceiba tree-Zurich

PRESENTATION: Upon hearing about the ELK European Country Conference in Belgium, I knew we had to go there for a visit. The largest conference in the world boasted 140 of international succulent vendors extending 600 linear meters! Combining this visit with world-class botanical gardens in Germany, France, and Switzerland made for an exciting and worthwhile adventure. This presentation shares some of the spectacular specimens, sights, and adventures from the October 2025 trip.



Zurich growing area



BIOGRAPHY: Roxie Esterle brings a lifelong fascination with biology to the study of cacti and succulents. As a science educator for all grades from middle school to college, Roxie received statewide recognition for her original lessons, hands-on methodology, and leadership. Her interest in succulents flourished after retirement. With her husband Jim, she has traveled the world to explore unique biological habitats including Galapagos Islands, Madagascar, Borneo, Ethiopia, South America, Namibia, Argentina, Chile, and South Africa. Each of these succulent hot-spot destinations has elevated her appreciation for the uniqueness and fragility of cacti and succulents.

Roxie served on the board of the Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society (LACSS) for nearly two decades, including serving as President. For the past nine years, she has served as Secretary of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA).

Submitted by Jim Tanner

November 2026 Mini-Show Plant of the Month Cactus and Succulent

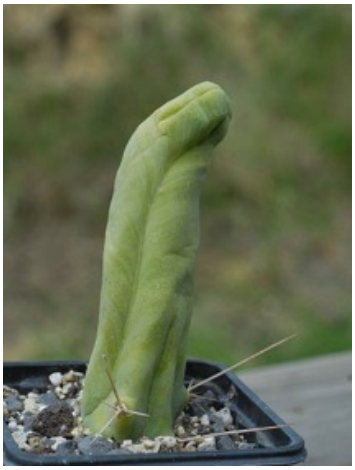
Crested and monstrose forms are the occurrence of growth mutations throughout the plant kingdom, but we happen to be most interested in the topic as it applies to succulents, especially cacti, euphorbias, aeoniums, echeverias, and other succulents too.

Crested and monstrose plants are those that exhibit abnormal, distorted or disfigured growth. This happens when a mutation occurs during cell division. But rather than perfectly flat layers of tissue resulting, the damage to the central growing point creates multiple growing points that crowd and push against each other. The peculiar shapes that form from this energy can resemble brains, fans, coral, and snakes.

In monstrose growth, the mutation typically makes random multiple growing points that are not stacked next to each other — there's one here, another over there, pushing the body of the plant all out of shape in disorderly fashion. The crested and monstrose forms generally occur because of injuries to the plant at a young age. In reaction to this injury, the cells at the tip of the branch where growth occurs begin to multiply at a much faster rate and the normal growing tip creates crested plants.

In monstrose specimens, each of those growth tips behaves as if it were the primary point. The result is messy, lumpy, monster-like growth. Cristates (crested) look more neat and symmetrical in comparison. Plants can exhibit mutated and regular growth at the same time. Crests and monstrose growth are unpredictable; no two are precisely alike. That goes for plants of the same species.

Cactus: Crested and Monstrose



Echinopsis lageniformis, Monstrose



Opuntia microdasys, Crested



Crest



Myrtillocactus geometrizans 'Elite Crest'



Lophocereus schottii, Monstrose



Mammillaria mystax



Echinopsis lageniformis, Monstrose Variegated

November 2026 Mini-Show Plant of the Month Cactus and Succulent

Succulents: Crested and Monstrose



Crested *Echeveria*



Echeveria cuspidata var. *zaragozae*, Crested



Echeveria 'Cubic Frost', Crested



Euphorbia alluaudii, Crested



Echeveria 'Cubic Frost', Crested



Euphorbia lactea, Crested

Submitted by Terri Straub, Photos by Mike Short

Mini-Show Winners October 2026

Cactus



1st - Gary Duke
Ariocarpus fissuratus



2nd - Gary Duke
Ariocarpus scaphirostrus



3rd - Gary Duke
Ariocarpus kotschoubeyanus

Open



2nd -Gary Duke
Adenia spinosa



3rd - Terri Straub
Adenium obesum

Succulent



1st - Jim Gardner
Adenium obesum



2nd - Jim Gardner
Adenium obesum



3rd - Maria Capaldo
Adenium boehmianum

Submitted by Terri Straub, Photos by Mike Short

Mini-Show Winners October 2026

Cactus

No entries

Intermediate



1st - Anita Caplan
Adenium obesum

Succulent



2nd - Anita Caplan
Adenium multflorum

Novice



1st - Gustavo and Denise Cardenas
Obregonia denegrii



1st - Chris Schavwecker
Adenium obesum



2nd - Chris Schavwecker
Ariocarpus hybrid



2nd - Chris Schavwecker
Adenium obesum



3rd - Gustavo and Denise Cardenas *Adenium*

Mini-Show Calendar 2026-2027		
Month	**Cactus**	**Succulent**
NOVEMBER	Crested and Monstrose	Crested and Monstrose
DECEMBER	Holiday Pot Luck	Holiday Pot Luck
JANUARY	*Mammillaria, Cochemiea*-hooked spines	Caudiciform (*Beaucarnia, Calibanus, Dioscorea, Fockea)* except *Pachypodium*
FEBRUARY	*Eriosyce*	*Gasteria* and hybrids
MARCH	*Echinocereus*	*Dudleya, Cotyledon*
APRIL	Show and Sale	Show and Sale
MAY	*Coryphantha, Pelecyphora, Acharagma,Sclerocactus*	*Crassula*
JUNE	*Gymnocalycium*	*Pachypodium, Hoya*
JULY	*Ferrocactus, Leuchtenbergia*	*Kalenchoe*
AUGUST	*Echinopsis*	Stapeliads *(Stapelia, Huernia, Orbea, etc.)*
SEPTEMBER	*Discocactus, Uebelmania*	*Dracaena (=Sansevieria)*
OCTOBER	Miniature (3 cm or less)	Miniature (3 cm or less)

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.

Mini-Show Standings October 2026

Novice Class	Cactus	Succulents	Totals
Martha Bjerke		9	9
Gustavo Cardenas	20	42	62
Debra Galliani	10	18	28
Anna Salas		1	1
Chris Schavwecker	26	16	42
Warren Woodrum	6	2	8
Liz Ying	11	10	21

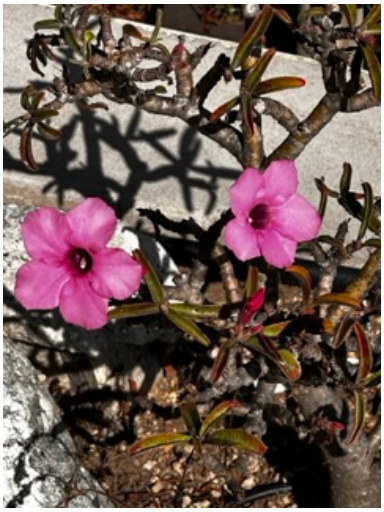
Intermediate Class	Cactus	Succulents	Totals
Anita Caplan	20	27	47
Vincent Darmali	14	24	38
Sally Fasteau	6	6	12
Jackie Johnson		12	12
Lemono Lott		17	17
Mike Short	7	20	27

Open Class	Cactus	Succulents	Totals
Maria Capaldo	47	36	83
Phyllis DeCrescenzo	53	41	94
Gary Duke	26	15	41
Jim Gardner	16	43	59
Jim Hanna		5	5
Terri Straub	37	43	80
Laurel Woodley		11	11

Member Photos

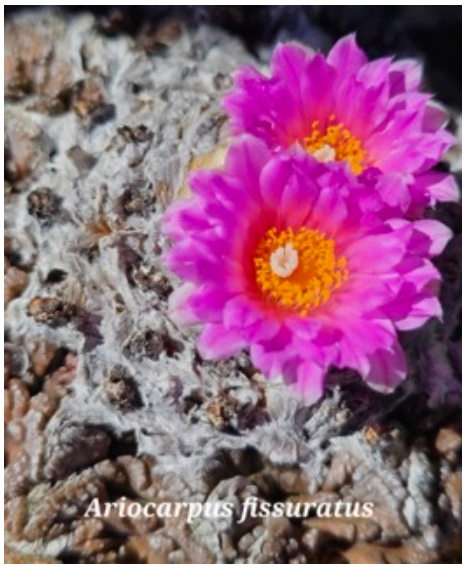


Pachypodium lamerei v. *saundersii*
by Anita Caplan



Adenium swazicum by Maria Capaldo

Photos by
Laurel Woodley







Upcoming Events



SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEETING

PRESENTER: Roxie Esterle
"Poking around Europe's Botanical Treasures"
Sunday November 8, 1:00pm-3:30pm
Fred Hesse Jr. Community Park
McTaggart Hall
29301 Hawthorne Blvd.
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275



Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society
Fall Sale: November 14, 10:00am-3:00pm
18255 Victory Boulevard
Los Angeles, California, 91335

For more information and to learn more

2026 Board of Directors and tasked positions

OFFICERS:

President
Maria Capaldo

Vice-President
Liz Ying

Treasurer
Debra Bushweit Galliani

Secretary
Nancy Sams

At-Large Board Members
Gustavo Cardenas
Teresa Nicolello
Linda O'Hara

STANDING COMMITTEES:

Show and Sale
Terri Straub

Programs Chair
M.A. Bjarkman

Mini-Show Coordinator
Terri Straub

Communications

Chair: Mike Short

Webmaster: Mike Short

Newsletter: Maria Capaldo

Publicity: Ann Nye

Facebook: Laurel Woodley

Instagram: Nancy Sams

Membership Chair:
Sally Fasteau

Liaisons:
CSSA: M.A. Bjarkman
CGCI: Debra Galliani





