



**San Gabriel Valley
Cactus & Succulent Society**

COMMUNIQUE

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc.

April 2009 - Volume 42, Number 4

**April Meeting:
Thursday,
April 9 at 7:30 pm**

Meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at **7:30 pm** in the Palm Room, Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia.

Mini-Show Plants:

CACTUS:
Echinocereus

SUCCULENT:
Haworthia

Study Group:

Study group will meet on Wednesday, April 15th in the Palm Room, Los Angeles County Arboretum at 7:30 pm. The topic will be:

Spring Seed Workshop

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President's Message

Our March meeting was fantastic, 98 members actually signed in. We were treated to a terrific talk by Woody Minnich. The Brazilian Highlands remains one of my "must see" places. All of those melocacti and blue ceriods are unreal. For those who get the British C&SS journal, the new one just arrived and the lead article is by Woody's traveling companion Marlon Machado and is all about the melocacti in the area. A nice follow-up to Woody's wonderful presentation.

April is always the busiest month for plant people. This April will be even more busy because of the CSSA convention in Tucson. Remember, the club will pay 1/2 of each member's registration fee for those who attend. In the meantime, don't forget the April meeting which will feature Guillermo Rivera, and the Study Group on April 15 (people attending the convention will miss this one) which is the ever popular Seed Workshop.

We've been having great attendance at Study Group. The move to the Arboretum was a positive one. *Continued on Page 3*

This Month's Program

Our speaker for April is Guillermo Rivera. He is from Argentina and has a PhD in botany, but has developed a real love for our succulent plant community. His talk will be on the succulent plants of Peru. We have seen two of Guillermo's high quality programs in the past and this one should be equally great. Don't miss this one!

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March Mini-Show Results

Cacti - U.S. Natives

Beginner

- 1st Ralph Massey Mara? macrocarpa
 2nd Anne Keegan Echinocereus pectinatus cv.
 "Coahuila"
 3rd Louise Stack Ariocarpus fissuratus

Intermediate

- 1st Barbara Nolan Ariocarpus fissuratus
 2nd Cindy & Calvin Arakaki Escobaria minima
 3rd Cindy & Calvin Arakaki Astrophytum asterias

Advanced

- 1st John Mathews Echinocactus horizontalonius
 Pat Swain Echinomastus johnsonii
 2nd John Mathews Ariocarpus fissuratus
 Pat Swain Sclerocactus polyancistrus
 3rd Glen & Linda Carlzen Ariocarpus fissuratus

Open

- 1st Vince Basta Ariocarpus fissuratus
 2nd Tom Glavich Ariocarpus fissuratus
 3rd Karen Ostler Echinocereus viridiflorus var.
 canus

Succulents - U.S. Natives

Beginner

- 1st Tom Howard Opuntia cv. "Santa Rita"
 2nd Efren Flores Dudleya pulverulenta
 3rd Oscar Flores Dudleya greentop mutite sprite

Intermediate

- 1st Barbara Hall Euphorbia misera
 2nd Barbara Nolan Dudleya sp.
 3rd Barbara Nolan Agave toumeyani

Advanced

- 1st Rita Gerlach Dudleya hoffmannii
 2nd Alan Hooker Jatropha berlandieri

Plants Of The Month

Enter your specimen plants in our monthly mini-show. It will help you prepare for the real shows and give you an additional opportunity to show others your pride and joy. If you don't have any of these species of plants you can learn about them at the meeting.

CACTI OF THE MONTH —

Echinocereus

Echinocereus is one of the earliest recognized genera of Cacti; first described in 1848 by George Engelmann from a plant collected in 1846 in what is now New Mexico. The type species (the first one found, and after which the genus is named) is *Echinocereus viridiflorus*, a widespread species with a distribution that ranges from Southern Wyoming, South Dakota, and Kansas to Eastern New Mexico. As the name suggests, it has brilliant green flowers.

Echinocereus species can be found throughout the Western United States, and the range of species stretches through the American west and through Northern and Central Mexico to about Mexico City. As might be expected from a genus covering such a large range, *Echinocereus* are extremely varied in form, ranging from nearly spineless green balls such as *E. knippelianus*, to very spiny short columnar species such as *E. engelmannii*, to pencil thin sticks such as *E. poselgeri*.

In general, *Echinocereus* is an under-appreciated genus. Many cactus growers try one or two; but having killed a few in their early collecting days, usually because of over watering, concentrate on other genera. Most of the species are in fact easy to grow.

Many species are variable, and exhibit different spination and flower colors depending on the local environment. As a result, a large number of species were named. These are being reduced to a more

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Be sure to take a look at the Club's website at www.sgvcss.com. Thanks to Gunnar Eisel for managing our website. If you wish to receive your **COMMUNIQUE** on-line please notify the editor at yvonne@pricklypalace.com.

Don't forget to get signed up for the Lotus Land trip on July 18. You can mail your \$25 per person (members and significant others/ immediate family only at this point) to Rita Gerlach.

The 2009 roster is out. If you did not pick your copy up at a recent meeting/Study Group look for your copy in the mail.

See you soon at a meeting! Buck Hemenway

Study Group

Wednesday, April 15th • Spring Seed Workshop

The study group is an informal, hands-on learning experience that is fun for expert and novice alike. Come and learn from the experience of others. We are always happy to share our knowledge.

Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Palm Room at the LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia.

8th ANNUAL POTTERS' SALE AT CARO DESERT NURSERY



Shoppers at the Potters' Sale



Potters Debbie and Charles Ball



Potters Karenn Ohlinder (left) and Joe Wujcik (right)



Mark Maradian with one of his "gut buster" pots.



Mike Hackett, Vince Basta and our host, Rene Caro



Hostess Patty Caro

SGVC&SS LEADERSHIP TEAM - 2009

Buck Hemenway, President
Horace Birgh, Vice President
Rita Gerlach, Treasurer
Anne Keegan, Secretary
Manny Rivera, Board Member and Winter Show Chair

Cindy Arakaki, Board Member
John Matthews, Board Member
Phil Skonieczki, Board Member
Karen Ostler, Board Member
Ralph Massey, Board Member
Tom Glavich, Intercity Show Chair

Jim Hanna, CSSA Affiliate Representative and Plant Sales Chair
Woody Minnich, Program Chair
Bill Gerlach, Membership Chair
Liz Alba, Library Chair
Gunnar Eisel, Website Chair

conservative 30 to 50, but the number of collectable forms remains very high. The varieties and local growth forms provide an enormous range of interesting plants to grow.

Most *Echinocereus* have spectacular flowers, giving rise to such common names as Claret Cup, Strawberry Cactus, Calico Cactus. These common names are often attached to more than one species. *Echinocereus* flowers erupt through the skin, leaving scars. Offsets also erupt through the skin.

Almost all the species need bright light and warm temperatures to grow well and flower. Some are quite easy, but most have somewhat fragile root systems that are prone to rot. They often benefit from being slightly underpotted. Good drainage is a must. A low organic potting mix, with mostly pumice and coarse sand will give the best results. The plants will keep their character from habitat.

Propagation from seed is fairly easy. Seed



Echinocereus barthelowanus

germinates in a few days to about two weeks in warm weather, as long as soil mixture is kept moist. Once germination occurs, the seedlings need to be moved to an environment with moving air. They need to be kept damp until they have hardened off.

Propagation from cuttings is relatively easy, but attention needs to cleanliness is important. Use of a good rooting compound containing a fungicide helps ensure success.

Excellent *Echinocereus*:

Echinocereus delaetii - spines are reduced to white hairs. Flowers are pink to purple, with a very obvi-

ous green stigma. One of the more difficult to grow. (from Coahuila, Mexico)

Echinocereus engelmannii - from the Southwestern United States and Northern Mexico. A clumping species with stems 2 to 3 inches thick with generally light tan spines and rose like flowers.



Echinocereus engelmannii in habitat near Corn Springs

Echinocereus knippelianus - dark green body, with slightly lighter ridges, nearly spineless, clustering, and slow. Lots of pale pink flowers. Sensitive to over watering, and a fan of mealybugs everywhere, but easily worth the bother. (from Coahuila, Mexico)

Echinocereus nivosus has dense white needle-like spines, with a dark green body. It clumps freely, and has large pink flowers, with bright green stamens. If this plant wasn't natural, it would be in bad taste. (from Coahuila, Mexico)

Echinocereus poselgeri was formally *Wilcoxia poselgeri*, and is one of several tuberous rooted species that have above ground pencil thin stems. They have bright pink flowers, and make an odd sight and an interesting addition to any collection. (from Texas, Coahuila, Mexico)



Echinocereus enneacanthus

Echinocereus rigidissimus - columnar, with bands of red, pink and cream spines. A classic, and a frequent show winner. Every collection ends up with one sooner or later. (from Arizona, New Mexico, Northern Mexico)

Echinocereus sharpii, (now *Echinocereus pulchellus* subspecies *sharpii*) discovered in 1971 by club member Peter Sharp near La Asencion in Nuevo Leon, is one of the more difficult to grow, and infrequently seen in cultivation.

Reference:

T. Anderson,
The Cactus Family

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH —

Haworthia

Haworthia, along with *Aloe* and *Gasteria* are part of the *Aloaceae* family. *Haworthia* are native exclusively to South Africa, and almost all from a Mediterranean environment not that different from Southern California. Almost all are easily grown, preferring some shade and growing mostly in the early autumn and spring through early summer.

Haworthia are one of the most collected of all succulent plants. There are about 60 species, but the number of subspecies, varieties and cultivars is overwhelming and continually increasing. Hybridization efforts in South Africa, the United States, Japan and Europe have produced amazing plants. Even so, selected cultivars of South African species still set the standard for elegance and beauty. The genus takes on a remarkable variety of forms, shapes and colors, all based on a simple rosette.



Haworthia cv 'Chocolate'

Bruce Bayer's *Haworthia Revisited* is the best guide to species and intergrades between spe-

cies. There are roughly sixty species, however there is widespread disagreement on the meaning of the word species as applied to *Haworthia*. Many species intergrade, with gradual variation from one species to another. Intergrades between three or more species are also found. On top of this many species are highly variable. Bayer's books do a great job at classifying the species not only by species name, but also by locality.

Haworthia in general are tolerant of varying potting mixes, and success has been reported with everything from straight pumice to potting soil - pumice or perlite mixes, to plain potting soil, and even garden soil. They like light fertilization when growing, any balanced fertilizer will do. *Haworthia* can be naturalized as a ground cover, placed under shrub cover in shadier parts of California gardens. They are great favorites of the local snails.

Haworthia like bright light and morning sun. The sun brings out the color of the leaves. If the light is too dim, the leaves will be a pale green and the leaves will stretch. The goal of the grower should be to get a firm, tightly packed rosette, showing the best color possible. Many species will exhibit reds, greens, whites and browns when grown properly. *Haworthia* are fairly free from most insect infestations, although scale can sometimes attack a plant. Scale is difficult to kill, but submerging the plant in soapy water with some insecticide will usually work. Mealybugs can sometime hide in the center. They respond to the same treatment.

Most of the plants in this genus offset easily, and propagation is easy from offsets. Offsets can often be removed with roots, and offsets without roots will put out roots in just a few weeks. Seed is sometimes available, and easily germinates in cool weather, with best results coming in October, November and January. The trick with *Haworthia* seed is to get enough growth on the seedlings to allow them to survive their first summer dormancy. Most seedling losses are due to heat and dry weather rather than over watering. Fresh seed is needed; most *Haworthia* seed lose their viability after a year or so.

Selected species

Haworthia cooperi is a fast growing species, with a

many interesting forms that vary from having round tips to sharp points. The leaves are very fat and almost cylindrical. It is very easy to grow and make an impressive show specimen.

Haworthia emelyae has smooth flat topped triangular leaves with small white tubercles (dots) that converge into lines running to the point. The edges of the leaves near the center of the plant are almost blood red in winter. The picture shows a particularly good form from near the Saffron River.



Haworthia Emelyae (Saffron River)

Haworthia pygmaea has sharp pointed gray-green triangular leaves. The tubercles are extremely fine, giving the tops an almost felt like appearance. To the touch, they feel the same as very fine sandpaper. The sides of the leaves are perfectly smooth.

Haworthia retusa v. *acuminata* has long sharply pointed leaves, decorated with white lines and teeth on the edge that are not visible, but can be easily felt. The leaves are smooth near the center, and just

slightly rough at the edge.

Haworthia truncata is easy to come by, but slow, and takes several years to form good looking heads. This has been the subject of intense work by the Japanese, and a number of patterns of white on green-gray have been developed and propagated. The one shown in the picture is propagated from plants originally from Dusseldorp.



Haworthia truncata

Haworthia venosa ssp. *tessellata* has a large number of leaf forms in cultivation, some with delicate patterns formed in nearly flat tops, some deeply incurved as shown in the picture on the previous page. An interesting collection can be made of this species alone.

References

M. B. Bayer, *Haworthia Revisited*

Tom Glavich, March 2009



Thank you to Tom Glavich for putting together the Plant of the Month article. If you would like to participate by submitting a plant of the month write up for the **Communique**, please contact Tom Glavich at tglavich@sbcglobal.net.



FIELD TRIP TO LOTUS LAND

Your board of directors is putting the finishing touches on our field trip to Lotus Land. We will hire a 50 passenger bus that the club pays for. The trip will be on Saturday, July 18, 2009. We'll leave the parking lot at the Arboretum at 7:00AM and have a 10:00AM appointment at the gardens for our tour. We plan to stop somewhere along the 101 freeway to pick up the 'Valley' residents so they don't have to come all of the way in to the Arboretum. We'll stop at at least one and probably two nurseries on the way home. The cost will be \$25.00 per person, plus your lunch. We plan to stop at a fairly large shopping center to give people a choice of prices and cuisine. Bill and Rita will take your reservations and money at upcoming meetings. First come first served. The trip is reserved for members and immediate family.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

April 10 thru 15 — CSSA Convention at the Westin La Paloma Resort, Tucson, Arizona. For more information go to www.cssainc.org.

April 18 and 19 — Green Scene Plant Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton, CA

May 2 and 3 — Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City. Call 310-822-1783 for more information.

May 3, 9am to 4pm — South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 263 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verde Peninsula. Call 310-833-6823 for more information.

May 9, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm — Gates Cactus and Succulent Society 2009 Show and Sale at the Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon (Riverside). For information call 951-360-8802.

June 13 and 14 — Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at the Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino. For show information call 818-363-3432.

June 26 thru 28 — Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) Annual Show and Sale at the Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino. Plant sales start June 26th thru June 28th. The Show is open on June 27th and June 28th. Free to the public. For information call 626-405-2160 or 951-360-8802.

July 24 thru 26 — Orange County Summer Show and Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton. Show and Sale open Friday, July 24th, noon to 4pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm. For information call 714-870-4887.

Refreshment Signup

These club members have signed up to provide refreshments at our next meeting.

William Molina

Karen Holgerson

Una Yeh

The first three club members who sign up and bring refreshments each month will receive a **FREE** plant as thanks.

2009 Plant-of-the Month and Study Group Topics

	Cacti of the Month	Succulent of the Month	Study Group
Apr.	Echinocereus	Haworthia	Spring Seed Workshop
May	Echinopsis	Echeveria	Vegetative Propagation Workshop
June	Cephalium bearing Cacti	Adenium	Astrophytum
July	Eriosyce	Cyphostemma	Staging
Aug.	Favorite	Favorite	Sansevieria
Sept.	Gymnocalycium	Euphorbia (caudiciform type)	Photo Tour
Oct.	Parodia & Notocactus	Stemless Mesembs - No Lithops	Ariocarpus
Nov.	Frailea & Blossfeldia	Tylecodon	Winter Seed Workshop

**The 2nd Caro Auction of
SHOW QUALITY CACTI
and a few very special succulents
And Nursery Grand Opening
Saturday April 18th, 2009 at 11:00 am
at the Caro Desert Nursery (CDP West)**

This will be the second of the incredible auctions of the Rene and Patty Caro specimen show plants. Last October 11, 2008 Rene and Patty decided to let go of about half of their superbly grown specimen cacti. The plants from this previous auction drew quite a lot of attention and all who attended were very impressed with the high quality of the Caro's plants. Patty and Rene have put forth **103 wonderful specimen plants** that you do not want to pass up! This auction will be at their new nursery in southern California, the **Caro Desert Nursery (CDP West)**. This is the old location of Cactus Data Plants at 9607 E. Avenue S12, Littlerock, CA 93543

Some of the genera represented include;

Ariocarpus, Astrophytum, Copiapoa, Aztekium and many others.
Also available, **show specimen succulents including** Cyphostemma,
Fouquieria, Bursera and Agaves.

Please put this date on your calendar for this fabulous auction!

This auction will be conducted by Woody Minnich. To get more information regarding the plants offered (**the plant list**) please e-mail cactusdata@msn.com or go to <http://www.CaroDesert.com/> where you can also view many of these plants. The auction will include; phone, fax, e-mail and web-site bidding for those not able to attend. For those who plan on attending, the nursery will open at 10:00 am for viewing and written bids, and the verbal auction will start at 11:00 am. For more information, feel free to call

Woody at 1-505-281-5884 or Rene and Patty Caro at 1-661-456-0787.

Visit www.CaroDesert.com for the latest updates.

We look forward to seeing you at this exciting event!

Come to the Grand Opening and Enjoy:

- Special Discounts • Show Pots • Top Dressing • Refreshments •
- Plant Related Art • New Plant Offerings from the Nursery •