## CACTUS CHRONICLE



### MISSION STATEMENT

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

THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM:

## DISCOVERING JOHN LAVRANOS Our travels in Manibia and Madagascan



### WITH TIM HARVEY

John Lavranos (1926-2018), through his explorations and research, made enormous contributions to the succulent plant world. Born on the Greek island of Corfu, he emigrated to South Africa after the end of the Second World War. He spent over 50 years discovering and describing new species. He is, perhaps, most noted for his discoveries from Somalia and Socotra, though he travelled extensively throughout Arabia and Africa including Madagascar. He moved to Portugal in 1995, continuing his quest for knowledge about the natural world. He was a recognized authority on the genus Aloe, with his best-known book being "Aloes: The Definitive Guide". A polyglot, John spoke Greek, English, German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Arabic and Afrikaans, as well as having a working knowledge of Ancient Greek and Latin. His wide general knowledge - though he professed to now 'nothing' - combined with a guick wit and generous sense of humor, made him a wonderful travelling companion. John co-led the 2004 CSSA field-trip to Madagascar, and we will see what he managed to find there, as well on a couple of trips to Namibia.

PLEASE SEND ME PHOTOS FROM YOUR COLLECTION OF FEROCACTUS, LEUCHTENBERGIA, DORSTENIA & FICUS! TO BE FEATURED IN OUR NEXT ISSUE!

(EMAIL NEWSLETTER@LACACTUS.COM)

-Kimberly

## BIO: TIM HARVEY

Tim is originally from England. He moved across the pond in 1992, falling a little short of the West Coast, working at the Ontario Cancer Institute in Toronto for a couple of years. He completed the trip to California when he went to work in the Biotechnology industry. He was also able to relocate his cactus collection, started 20 years earlier, to a more favorable climate. Escaping the industry with his morals intact in 2006, he enrolled as a full-time propagator and pollinator of his favorite plants, as well as



becoming Editor of the Cactus and Succulent Journal in 2011. He makes frequent trips to his adopted country Namibia, as well as appearances at clubs in Southern California, either as a Speaker, or as a Vendor. Never able to walk past a plant in flower without trying to pollinate it, he is also a keen hybridizer, with the Pachycauls, Aloes and bulbs in his collection being defenceless subjects for experimentation.

# SECOND SATURDAYS with LACSS

**AEONIUMS: ALL AEONIUMS LOOK THE SAME...NOT!!!** 

WITH MARQUITA ELLIAS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 HOST WILL OPEN MEETING ROOM AT 10:00AM

A BLAST WILL BE SENT OUT AGAIN!

### **2020 OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT Joyce Schumann

PAST PRESIDENT Kim Thorpe Chavez

1ST VP, PROGRAMS Ron Behar

2ND VP, PLANT OF THE MONTH Manny Rivera

3RD VP, SPECIAL EVENTS
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CACTUS CHRONICLE EDITOR Kimberly Gomez-Tong newsletter@lacactus.com

MEETING REFRESHMENTS Karen Holley

WEBMISTRESS Nancy Neymark

CACTUS GARDEN CHAIR Chris Rogers

CSSA LIAISON Roxie Esterle

**FALL SALE** 

FESTIVAL CHAIR Artie Chavez

INTER-CITY REPRESENTATIVE Karen Ostler

MONTHLY DRAWING Al Mindel

PLANT PROCUREMENT Collin O'Callaghan

HISTORIAN Nils Schirrmacher

HOLIDAY PARTY CHAIR Debi Heaps

LIBRARIAN Susan Phillips

POM PLANT DESCRIPTIONS Kyle Williams

ZOOM MANAGEMENT TEAM Emily Akers + John Giesing



HI TO EVERYONE!

Looking on the bright side of things:

Attendance for our Monthly meeting is holding steady and we have maintained our roster of exceptional speakers and their very interesting programs. Most of us needed to learn about Zoom meetings and we are now experts.

Attendance for our Saturday Sessions is also holding steady with about the same number of members who attended the in-person meetings. We have all gained Zoom experience and knowledge.....

We have gained new members in spite of the social-distancing limitations.

I have not heard any cries of anguish over the loss of plants due to the excessive heat. Providing shade for our plants seems to be the best method to protect them. Most of them are accustomed to heat but sun-tanning is no longer in vogue.

Apparently, everyone has abided by the mask/distance requirements as I have not heard of any of us being infected by the virus. Good health is always a priority. The Plant of the Month continues to receive many entries into the photo sharing event and Manny continues to inform and entertain us with his commentary. And, of course, Kyle Williams writes the "official" plant descriptions that should be compiled into a book of knowledge for each plant.

Our website continues to be updated and improved. The "glossary" section has additions every month. The current issues of Cactus Chronicle are now available in the "Members Only" section. If you don't have a password, please email newsletter@lacactus.com

Our newsletter editor, Kimberly has added a mid-monthly supplement and continues to produce a first rate publication.

All of the above are brief comments to remind ourselves that our interests in cacti & succulents remain constant in our lives and provide comfort and consistency for all of us. The challenges of the pandemic have given LACSS the opportunity to explore new ways to roll with the times and prove to all that we will continue to fulfill its mission. LACSS has proven to all that we as a "family" have looked inside ourselves, liked what we saw and will continue reach for the future. Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay positive.

See you soon, Joyce Schumann

## PLANT of MONTH POLICIES

We are so very excited that so many photos have been sent in for the POM slideshow! In an attempt to insure that everyone's photo can be included in the POM time slot, we are asking each contributor to limit the number of photos submitted. Each member can submit up to three photos of cacti and up to 3 photos of succulents per category. This is in line with the limits for our regular competition of live plants. Should we be blessed with more than 100 photos, (Bring it on! We would love it!!) I will select the best 50 and present those.

As a reminder, monstrose, crested, and variegated are separate categories and should not be included in the regular plant category. We appreciate your understanding of this being a time management issue and that this is not intended to discourage anyone from sharing their wonderful plants with the rest of us.

See you soon. Stay safe and healthy.

Best,

Manny Rivera (VP- Plant of the Month)

ucculont soci

Reminder PLANT MONTH 2020

> SEPTEMBER Sulcorebutia & Weingartia Fockea

OCTOBER Ferocactus & Leuchtenbergia Dorstenia & Ficus

> NOVEMBER Parodia & Notocactus Euphorbia Stem Type

DECEMBER
Crest & Monstrose
Crest & Monstrose

### PLANT® MONTH 2021

JANUARY Columnar cactus Sedum & Sempervivum

FEBRUARY fammillaria straight spines Pelargonium

> MARCH Copiapoa Bulb

APRIL Echinocereus Conophytum

Hello everybody!

My name is Nicole and I took on the responsibility of starting and maintaining an Instagram account for our

members and cactus and succulent enthusiasts all over the world. This page has been a great way to share the amazing wonder of cactus and succulents. Check it out, give us a follow and PLEASE PLEASE send any pictures of your succulents and cactus (and the specimens name) by direct message or to my email. Include your name as well as your Instagram handle so I can give you credit. You can send pictures of pots you have made or like, information on the plant pictures you send, books you recommend, etc. If you have more than one angle of the potted plant that would work best so we can see the pottery you have chosen. Anything cactus, succulent, and club related. We'd love to also see pictures of you with your plants.

I look forward to posting pictures of your plants! Thank you to all club members that have supported this page thus far.

## PLANT MONTH SUBMISSIONS

THESE PHOTOS HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR THE CHRONICLE, PLEASE ATTEND LACSS FIRST ZOOM MEETING ON JULY 2ND TO VIEW ALL SUBMISSIONS!



FOCKEA EDULIS RON BEHAR



SULCOREBUTIA MENTOSA FELIPE DELGADO



SULCOREBUTIA ALBA DUKE + KAZ BENADOM



SULCOREBUTIA SUCRENSIS GRETCHEN DAVIS



SULCOREBUTIA SP. COLLIN O'CALLAGHAN + KIMBERLY GOMEZ-TONG



FOCKEA EDULIS BARBARA + KENT BUTTERWORTH



FOCKEA EDULIS COLLIN O'CALLAGHAN + KIMBERLY GOMEZ-TONG



WEINGARTIA HAJECKANA DUKE + KAZ BENADOM



WEINGARTIA NEOCUMMINGII BARBARA HALL

### SEPTEMBER PLANT MONTH

### SULCOREBUTIA, WEINGARTIA (PLUS REBUTIA) BY KYLE WILLIAMS

Photo credits: Kyle Williams

Sulcorebutia, Weingartia, and Rebutia are South American cacti from the highlands of Bolivia and Northern Argentina. They are similar in appearance, in habitat and culture. Coming from high altitudes, they are both tolerant of cold, and if dry, can be left out in all weather. The populations of species of these genera overlap, but they do not naturally hybridize.

These genera are easily grown. They are dormant in winter, and start to grow in late March or April. They flower from April through June, with the peak flowering period varying from year to year depending on the weather. Two flowering cycles are common in cultivation in California. The flowers appear in abundance, and vary in color from purple and red through orange to yellow. They do well in standard cactus mix, and grow best with regular fertilization when in active growth. They are both attractive to spider mites. Damage can be prevented by frequent inspection, and a weekly, forceful wash down with water. I have found mealybug infestations in S. rauschii to be particularly difficult to deal with because of the numerous densely packed heads. Multiple applications of imidacloprid (e.g. Bayer Tree and Shrub) over the course of six months were needed to eliminate my plant's infestation.



Sulcorebutia rauschii

Propagation from offsets is easy. The offsets should be cut off, left to dry for a few days, and then replanted. Very small offsets can be successfully rooted. Seed is easy to germinate, but is short lived.

Those of you who enjoy banging your head against a wall will enjoy learning about Rebutia, Sulcorebutia, and Weingartia taxonomy. It is one of the most complex taxonomic problems among cacti and has been argued over for years. Thankfully, DNA sequencing and phylogenetic systematics research is finally starting to make headway into the issue, though much is left to be done. This subject is far too complicated to get into detail here, but Sulcorebutia and Weingartia (as well as the monotypic Cintia knizei) should be lumped into a single genus, with Weingartia being the oldest name (and therefore the one that should be used.



Sulcorebutia candiae



Weingartia trollii

Rebutia itself is distinct from these genera but has an even bigger problem, it contains two groups of species that are not closely related to each other (in scientific terms Rebutia is not monophyletic). One group of Rebutia is related to the Weingartia/Sulcorebutia group (but not part of it). This group includes R. padcayensis and R. miniscula. For nomenclatural reasons this is the group that would remain Rebutia. A second group of Rebutia including R. pseudodeminuta, R. fiebrigii, R. deminuta, R. pygmaea, R. steinmannii and R. einsteinii is distinct evolutionarily from the first group and will be considered a different genus. This group will require a new name for the genus. It should be noted that there are clear morphological differences that separate these groups, so it isn't just DNA that "says" they are different!

Just to summarize: Rebutia will become two genera and Sulcorebutia, Weingartia, and Cintia will be lumped into a single genus.

\* Please note that the plants to enter in this month's contest are only Sulcorebutia and Weingartia is impossible to properly discuss these genera without also talking about Rebutia

### I SEPTEMBER PLANT of MONTH

### FOCKEA BY KYLE WILLIAMS

Photo credits: Kyle Williams + SA Plants

The Apocynaceae is one of the largest of all plant families, with familiar plants such as Milkweed, Plumeria, and Oleanders. People may also recognize the name Asclepiadaceae, which is an old name for some members of the group. It is very popular with succulent enthusiasts as the family has hundreds succulent species including trees, shrubs, caudiciform vines, and even cactus like plants. Almost every succulent enthusiast will have at least one member of the family in their collection, whether it be a Pachypodium, Adenium, Stapeliad, or the subject of this month's article: Fockea a popular and easy to grow Southern African tuberous caudiciform.

Fockea is one of the most commonly cultivated caudiciform species in the family and succulents in general, with F. edulis found in the collections of most caudiciform succulent enthusiasts. All six species in the genus form

a thick tuberous root that is normally buried below the soil in



Fockea edulis

nature when young, but is commonly raised in cultivation since it is the most distinctive feature of the plants. The upper part of the plant is a twining vine. In nature some species, such as F. multiflora, can get enormous. The main stem can grow up and twine around tree trunks. This habit plus the gray color of the stems can make it look very similar to the unrelated Strangler Figs (Ficus spp.). It is very likely that large Fockea actually do occasionally "strangle" and kill the trees they grow on.

Much of the variation between species is in regards to leaf shape, with some species having short oval leaves, some having very narrow almost linear leaves, and others having very wavy leaves. These wavy, or undulate, leaves are most prominent in Fockea capensis, and plant commonly but incorrectly grown in cultivation as F. crispa. In other words, there is no F. crispa, and if you have a plant named that please change your label to F. capensis!

Cultivation of this genus is fairly easy. Treat as a summer growing succulent that doesn't like to dry out completely. Most plants will go dormant or semi-dormant in the winter and shouldn't be watered as often, though they seem fairly tolerant of our wet winters if the soil is well drained. Plants generally retain their leaves during the winter unless kept extremely dry or unusually cold (unlikely in our region). The tubers/caudex grow the fastest when buried, so it is advantageous to grow them that way for several years before raising them.



Fockea multiflora



Fockea angustifolia flowers



## GREENHOUSE NOTES

BY KAREN OSTLER

## MID AUGUST and as I write this summer has arrived with a vengeance. Record breaking temperatures and multiple fires already are burning around Los Angeles County, air quality is bad and the heat is absolutely debilitating.

We might not like the heat but most of our plants certainly do. But what they don't like is the combination of high temperatures and hot sunlight. At this time of year plants in pots are extremely vulnerable to cooking; especially it they are in plastic pots; imagine your feet in rubber boots and that's how the poor plants are feeling.

One solution is to lightly cover your plants with a white frost blanket, or a white sheet. Or you can move them into a shadier position in your yard. I would recommend that you can use a lawn chair or a patio table or bench to hold the covering away from your plants, because air circulation is vital to helping to keep temperatures down in the immediate area of the plants.

In the greenhouse I have three big box fans set in the rafters that run 24/7/365, in the summer I combine them with a little evaporative cooler. This does little to mitigate the heat, other than put a tiny bit of moisture into the air, but the moving air has saved many a plant from death by cooking. Just as a fan helps us when it is so hot, the air movement helps the plants.

This same principle holds in the winter time as well; the moving air prevents the cold from settling on the plants and damaging them. That is why I recommend holding the covering up and not directly laying on your plants; again think about a blanket on you when it's hot; it is just not helping.

Plants in the ground usually don't have the same problems; I am not saying they never get too hot and cook; but it is less likely.

However, we recently enlarged the cactus garden in our front yard; adding Cereus, Opuntias, Tephrocactus, Trichocereus, Eriosyce, Echinocereus, moved in from another area of the yard and all were already adapted to the harsh life in the open. But I wanted to add some Echinocactus that had grown too large to be kept in pots any longer. They were moved out from the greenhouse in April but haven't really adjusted to the brighter sunlight yet; so now six nicely sized Echinocactus are sporting jaunty little hats made out of aluminum screening. Not really that attractive, but if it saves them from developing burns, I am all in.

Even some caudiciform plants need to be protected from the harsh light of mid-summer. Aluminum screen to the rescue. When we lived in the Valley, I grew a lot of Bursera and every summer they all wore fitted 'jackets' made of screen to protect them. Not pretty, but think of it as sunscreen for your nose; you don't want a burn and neither do your plants.

Stay safe, stay home and stay healthy. Happy growing, Karen

## PLANT TOURS FOR 2021 COVID-19 UPDATES

Guillermo Rivera Plant Expeditions www.plantexpeditions.com plantexpeditions@gmail.com 1 (941) 447 2160

### Dear Friends:

Firstly, I would like to send you all my best wishes during this difficult time and hope that you, your family and friends are keeping safe and well.

What a crazy year 2020 has been for all of us. As you can imagine, it has hit me hard, as not trips or tours could be planned during this year.

No tours = no income! Luckily, most participants that booked for 2020, agreed to postpone their booked tours until 2021. So, all in all I am holding up pretty good [I didn't have to use all of the deposit money to prepay hotels, so that has helped!]

I have been trying to keep busy prepping for 2021, mainly with hotel reservations (yes, everything had to be done again, cancelling, making new reservations, etc.), but also working on some house projects, new trip ideas, etc.

This is basically un update of what is planned for 2021. I am optimistic about the vaccine for several reasons:



- · So far, no setbacks have been reported on those that have undergone phase 1 and 2 trials. In fact, results from these phases were all encouraging, and the pharmaceutical companies are already on phase 3 trials.
- · Virus seems quite stable, not mutating, making it an easier target for vaccine development.
- · Despite the different approaches from different pharmaceutical companies, all seem to have achieved good results at this stage.
- · Mass production of vaccines is already under way in three companies, even though they are still awaiting results from phase 3 and FDA approval, suggesting the companies are more than optimistic that vaccines are effective. When FDA approved, vaccines will be ready for distribution.

All things considered, I am optimistic and here is a sum-up of what is being planned for next year. Due to some cancellations, some places have become open, and please do not hesitate to ask regarding places left (and maybe share information on availability with friends, family and or your club/society please).

Possible additional trip to Peru in September (Puya raimondii, great cacti in flower, Manu-Amazon extension, etc.). Right now, this is just an idea, as you can see, I shall be plenty busy with other tours, so a big maybe for now. But please let me know if you may be interested in this tour.

Keep safe, we will be traveling again soon! All the best,

Guillermo

A	BAJA (cactus)	April 13-27, 2021	sold out
В.	NAMIBIA (succulents)	May 9-23, 2021	2 places left
С	ECUADOR (bromeliads- orchids)	June 18 - July 3, 2021	4 places left
D	RED SEA (diving)	July 15-22, 2021	2 places left
E	SOUTH AFRICA (succulents-flowers)	August 14-27, 2021	sold out
F	MADAGASCAR (succulents)	October 14-30, 2021	3 places left
G	ARGENTINA/CHILE (cactus)	Nov 19- Dec 5, 2021	confirming soon?

## Plant Expedition

BAJA CALIFORNIA: "From San Diego to Cabo" APRIL 2021 (best weather), 3 islands: Carmen, Magdalena, & Cerralvo

The Baja Peninsula is one of Mexico's richest areas for plants. Cactus species are abundant, Ferocactus, Echinocereus, Mammillaria, Stenocereus, Lophocereus and of course choyas! Because of its isolation, the peninsula includes quite a few endemics, like Pachycereus pringlei, Echinocereus lindseyi, Lophocereus schottii, among others. Many other interesting plants grow in Baja: Dudleya, Agave, Fouquieria, Euphorbia, Beaucarnea, etc. The scenery is spectacular, clear water, beaches, and of course, the visit to a few islands complete this magic trip! http://www.plantexpeditions.com/baja

Dates: April 13-27, 2021 - CONFIRMED DATES Duration: 14 days

Mode: All inclusive, starts in Tijuana, ends in Cabo

Price: \$4250 all-inclusive except air fare
(Single occupancy, add \$550) - SOLD OUT

### NAMIBIA: MAY 2021 Best time for plants and Etosha wildlife safari!

This trip will now include a visit to world famous Sossusvlei dunes. The itinerary will continue to offer a visit several populations of Welwitschia mirabilis and Cyphostemmma and all the way north to the border of Angola to Epupa falls to see Adansonia digitata in a spectacular setting. We will spend two full days in Etosha National Park for a GREAT safari experience. Tours will be co-guided by Sean Braine, probably the best natural history guide in Namibia with excellent knowledge on plants, birds, geology, and country's natural history. We will visit 3 Welwitschia renowned populations, plus we will see Aloe, Cyphostema, Commiphora, Adansonia, Adenium, Hoodia, and of course many Acacias. Promise you will not be disappointed!

As previously we will be doing this tour in 4x4 with pop up roof ideal for game watching and photography. Accommodations in mostly luxury lodges! http://www.plantexpeditions.com/namibia

Dates: May 9-23, 2021 - CONFIRMED DATES Duration: 15 days

Mode: All inclusive, starting and ending in Windhoek

Price: \$4900. All-inclusive except air fare
(Single occupancy, add \$600) - 2 PLACES LEFT

### ECUADOR: JUNE-JULY 2021 Over 150 species of Bromeliads in habitat!

This trip will combine the best of Southern and Northern Ecuador. A must for anyone into Bromeliads. I have traveled in Ecuador on 8 different occasions. I am planning to add and explore a few new places on this trip (hence more days). http://www.plantexpeditions.com/ecuador

Dates: June 18 - July 3, 2021 Duration: 17 days (after Bromeliad World Conference in Sarasota)

Mode: starting in Guayaquil, ending in Quito.

Price: \$4250 all-inclusive except air fare (Single occupancy, add \$580) – 4 PLACES LEFT

(Minimum number of participants 8).

#### **RED SEA (DIVING TOUR) JULY 2021**

Explore the dreamy Brothers, Daedalus and Elphinstone, which offer a breathtaking underwater world consisting of steep walls, wreck diving and an abundance of marine animals. An ideal tour for those who want to experience world famous wrecks and reefs. Brother Islands, Daedalus and Elphinstone is a must for all die-hard Red Sea divers! https://www.plantexpeditions.com/redsea

2 PLACES LEFT

Dates: **July 15-22, 2021** Duration: 8 days

Mode: All inclusive, departure and arrival are Price: \$1574. All-inclusive except air fare

from Port Ghalib

### SOUTH AFRICA Namaqualand AUGUST 2021 (Mesembs in bloom, flowering desert)

We have done the trip four times but never putting so much emphasis in the Richtersveld! We can still see the desert in flower, with warmer temperatures in September. Many Aloes and Mesembs: Crassula, Lithops, Tylecodon, Hoodia, Conophytum, Argyroderma, and others!! http://www.plantexpeditions.com/southafrica

Dates: August 14-27, 2021

Mode: All inclusive, starting and ending in Cape Town

Duration: 14 days

Price: \$4800. All-inclusive except air fare (Minimum 8)

(Single occupancy, add \$580) - **SOLD OUT** 

### MADAGASCAR: OCTOBER 2021 Succulents and wildlife: lemurs, chameleons, and more!

"The island of the big trees". After two trips to the island I am ready to go back! Journey to the western and southern part of the Island of Madagascar. The island is not only rich in plant endemisms (plants that are only found in this place), but also unusual animals: Lemurs and Chameleons are almost exclusively found in Madagascar. Among the plants, the genus Adansonia is perhaps the most common, but plenty of Aloe, Euphorbia, Didierea, Alluaudia, and Pachypodium. http://www.plantexpeditions.com/madagascar

Dates: October 14-30, 2021

Mode: All inclusive, starting and ending in Antananarivo.

(Number of participants 10-11).

Duration: 17 days

Price: \$4750, all-inclusive except air fare

(Single occupancy, add \$580) – **3 PLACES LEFT** 

### ARGENTINA NOVEMBER 2020 (all cactus in bloom)

We will start in central Argentina, visiting the provinces of Cordoba, Salta, Jujuy, for their Gymnocalycium, Echinopsis, Parodia. http://www.plantexpeditions.com/argentina

Dates: November 2020 (exact dates to be announced)

Mode: All inclusive, starting and ending in Cordoba, Argentina. (Minimum number of participants 8) Duration: 17 days

Price: \$4250 all-inclusive except air fare

(Single occupancy, \$550)

#### ARGENTINA AND CHILE NOVEMBER 2020 Cactus tour

CROSSING THE ANDES: Argentina and Chile combined in one trip. https://www.plantexpeditions.com/argentina-chile

Dates: November 2020 (exact dates to be announced)

Mode: All inclusive, starting and ending in Cordoba, Argentina. (Minimum number of participants 8) Duration: 17 days

Price: \$4550 all-inclusive except air fare

(Single occupancy, \$550)

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