

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:

THE EASTERN CAPE

with Brian Kemble

South Africa is home to more species of succulents than any country on earth, and the Eastern Cape Province is one of the country's treasure houses for plants such as aloes, haworthias, gasterias, euphorbias and much more. The Eastern Cape is in the southern part of the country, and is mostly a summer-rainfall region, though along the coast there is some winter rain as well.

Brian Kemble is Vice-President of the San Francisco Succulent & Cactus Society, and also Vice-President of the Institute for Aloe Studies (www.aloestudies.org). He is the Curator at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, CA (www.ruthbancroftgarden.org), where he has worked since 1980. He has done presentations on various topics before, but this presentation focuses on a trip he made to South Africa's Eastern Cape Province in 2014. Included also are photos of *Aloe polyphylla* in the Drakensburg Mountains of Lesotho, to the north of the Eastern Cape.



PLEASE SEND ME PHOTOS OF THIS MONTH'S POM, COPIAPOA AND BULBS FROM YOUR COLLECTION!

(EMAIL NEWSLETTER@LACACTUS.COM)

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A MESSAGE FROM THE LACSS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greetings LACSS Members!

First, some great news: Joyce Schumann, LACSS President, will be returning to her regular role after the February meeting. Both she and Membership Chair Rose Polito are feeling well post-COVID and are eager to get back to their work with LACSS. Welcome back!

Many of you also joined us for the "Ask the Experts" discussion of dealing with our strange winter weather during the Saturday workshop. This was a great opportunity to ask all your growing questions. You may have wondered what to do when there is no winter and it's 90° in January! Now, it looks like we are in for some cold weather in the next few weeks, so here are a few reminders: Cacti and succulents don't like to be wet and cold. Try to get them under some protection if possible. A cover such as burlap or freeze cloth will help with the cold, but don't let cold wet cloth rest on your plants. A fan to keep the air moving is good protection for a freeze.

Our regular meetings offer opportunities for expert advice. It works really well if you send a picture of your plant in question to Kimberly so that everyone can see what you are talking about. This goes for plant identification, plants with problems such as die-back or insect damage, and plants that you simply want to "show off."

In the plant world, "showing off" is really our way of sharing something special that is going on in your garden. Do you go out and check your plants every single day? You know the excitement when a new bud is detected, or something flowers for the first time. Once again, we invite you to send an article with photographs about what is happening in your garden. Let us all delight in your successes, big and small! Please send your article to Kimberly (newsletter@lacactus.com). And thank you, Kimberly.

Have you been enjoying the Cactus and Succulent Society of America's bi-monthly seminar series? CSSA is generously offering presentations from a prestigious range of international cactus and succulent experts on alternate Saturday mornings. Go to their website (www.cactusandsucculentsociety.org) for the most current information and registration. You don't have to be a CSSA member to sign up, but of course, your membership is greatly appreciated and well worth it.

Now that our membership is accustomed to using Zoom for meetings, **WE ARE READY TO OPEN THE ZOOM ROOM AT 6:30 INSTEAD OF 6:00.** Announcements will begin at 6:45, and the meeting will officially start at 7:00pm. Many thanks to Emily Akers for officially managing our Zoom meetings.

Our Plant-of-the-Month competition begins with "real points" in February. The plants are Cactus: Straight-spined Mammillaria and Succulent: Pelargonium. We look forward to seeing your photos, and hopefully Kimberly has already received them. March POM plants are Cactus: Copiapoa and Succulent: Bulbs. Please TRY to submit your photos for March to Kimberly by February 15 (thank you, Kimberly, for your flexibility). While we have enjoyed fantastic presentations online over the past year, the key to keeping our meetings lively and interesting is your participation.

Stay healthy and stay in the garden!



PLANT-OF-THE-MONTH ONLINE POLICIES

AS LACSS CONTINUES ITS ONLINE MEETING FORMAT FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS, SOME SLIGHT MODIFICATIONS IN THE PLANT-OF-THE-MONTH (POM) COMPETITION HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BEGINNING FEBRUARY, 2021. WE HOPE THESE CHANGES WILL MOTIVATE MORE MEMBERS TO COMPETE IN THIS LONG-STANDING EDUCATIONAL TRADITION. BESIDES, IT'S REALLY FUN TO GET YOUR PLANTS READY FOR THEIR CLOSE-UPS.

- SUBMISSIONS WILL BE LIMITED TO A MAXIMUM OF 2 CACTUS AND 2 SUCCULENT SUBMISSIONS PER PERSON.
- WINNING POINTS WILL BE RECORDED AND ACCUMULATED FOR PRIZES AWARDED AT OUR YEAR-END HOLIDAY PARTY IN 2021.
- COMPETITION DIVISIONS (ROOKIE, NOVICE, ADVANCED, AND OPEN) WILL BE JUDGED TOGETHER, AS THERE AREN'T ENOUGH PLANTS FOR A COMPETITION IN EACH DIVISION.
- ONE POINT WILL BE AWARDED FOR EACH ENTRY, AND WINNERS IN THE CACTUS AND THE SUCCULENT AREAS WILL BE AWARDED 3 POINTS FOR 3 RD PLACE, 4 POINTS FOR 2ND PLACE, AND 5 POINTS FOR 1 ST PLACE.
- PHOTOS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO OUR CACTUS CHRONICLE EDITOR : NEWSLETTER@LACACTUS.COM BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH PRECEDING THE COMPETITION IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE JUDGING.
- MANNY RIVERA WILL SELECT THE WINNING CACTUS AND SUCCULENT BASED ON THE PHOTOS, TO BE ANNOUNCED DURING THE MEETING.
- POM CATEGORIES FOR THE YEAR 2021 ARE LISTED ON THE RIGHT

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN THIS ACTIVITY!

PLANT^{of the} MONTH 2021

JANUARY

Columnar cactus
Sedum & Sempervivum

FEBRUARY

Mammillaria straight spines
Pelargonium

MARCH

Copiapoa
Bulb

APRIL

Echinocereus
Conophytum

MAY

Cacti staged as miniature
Succulent staged as miniature
(Diameter of pot
NO LARGER THAN 2")

JUNE

Favorites

JULY

Echinofossulocactus
(aka Stenocactus)
Adenium

AUGUST

Echinopsis
Euphorbia with caudex

SEPTEMBER

Ariocarpus
Cyphostemma & Cissus

OCTOBER

Grafted
Grafted

NOVEMBER

Variegated
Variegated

DECEMBER

Holiday Awards Party



PLANT^{of the} MONTH SUBMISSIONS

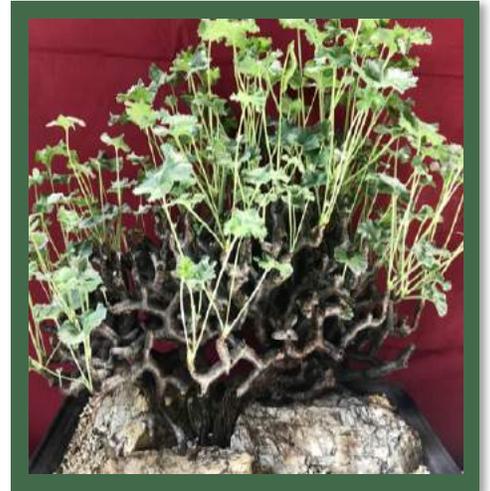
THESE PHOTOS HAVE BEEN SELECTED FOR THE CHRONICLE, PLEASE ATTEND LACSS ZOOM MEETING ON JANUARY 7TH TO VIEW ALL SUBMISSIONS!



PELARGONIUM APENDICULATUM
JOHN VAN UNEN



PELARGONIUM SP.
FREDDIE + JONICE ANDERSON



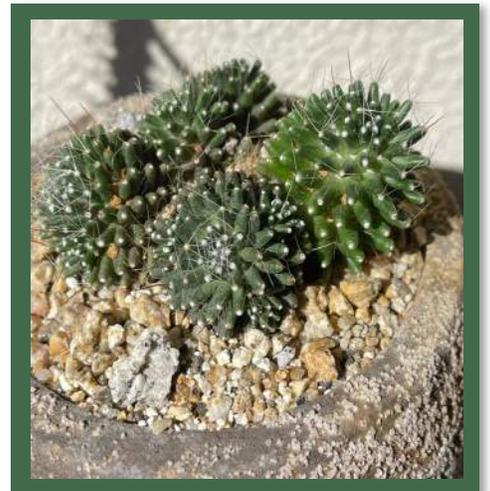
PELARGONIUM MIRABILE
MANNY RIVERA



MAMMILLARIA HAAGEANA SUBSP. SCHMOLLII
BARBARA HALL



PELARGONIUM SP.
BARBARA HALL



MAMMILLARIA PAINTERI
EMILY AKERS + JOHN GIESING



PELARGONIUM TETRAGONUM
SANDU MASUO



MAMMILLARIA GEMINISPINA
CANDE FRIEDMAN



MAMMILLARIA GEMINISPINA
ROXIE + JIM ESTERLE

FEBRUARY PLANT^{of the} MONTH

MAMMILLARIA WITH STRAIGHT SPINES

BY KYLE WILLIAMS

Photo Credits: Kyle Williams

Mammillaria is quite possibly the most popular genus of cacti, and is usually one of the first succulents a person buys. There are several reasons for this. With nearly 200 species, Mammillaria is one of the larger genera in the Cactaceae, which means there is an enormous amount of variety to choose from. Some species are fingernail size, others solitary globular plants, some are straight spined, some form sizeable clumps, while others are heavily spined with hooks. This month we focus on the species with straight spines.

Mammillarias, both straight and hooked spined, are ubiquitous at any nursery, big box store, or even supermarket that sells plants. Most species are small, easy to grow, and have a “cute” factor that make even non-gardeners want to buy one for their patio or windowsill. The most commonly grown species are also quite tolerant of abuse and neglect. Straight spine species are sharp but make an attractive contrast to the main body of the plant. While some straight spine species are closely related, two species having straight spines does not necessarily mean they are more related to each other than to hooked spine species.



Mammillaria spinosissima



Mammillaria chionocephala



Mammillaria geminispina

One of the most distinctive features of Mammillaria are flowers born in the axils of the tubercles that as a group form a ring around the stem. They are usually small, but many can be open at once providing a nice display. Flowers range in color from white and yellow to pink and red. Other species have orange, salmon, or even bicolor flowers.

Mammillaria ranges from Columbia all the way to Canada. Approximately ten species are found in the south western portion of the United States, including California. The heart of Mammillaria diversity is Mexico however. Most species occur there and you can see the full range of variation the genus has to offer. While some species are extremely hardy (particularly the North

American species), others are more frost sensitive. Almost all Mammillaria will do just fine in Southern California, with little or no winter protection, as long as they are potted in a freely draining potting mix. If you live in areas that get hard frost in the winter (e.g. the Antelope Valley) be sure to check the frost tolerance of your species.

The secrets to good growth are a continual supply of water and fertilizer during the growing season (typically from March through October), strong light, intense heat if available, and maintenance of a clean and insect free growing environment. Many people starve and under water their plants, in attempt to avoid rot. Most Mammillaria will take quite a bit of water and fertilizer when in growth. During the summer heat growth slows for a time, picking up again when the weather cools, before stopping around Thanksgiving.

FEBRUARY PLANT^{of the} MONTH

PELARGONIUM

Photo Credits: Kyle Williams

On any street, anywhere in the country, you will find numerous homes growing Pelargonium hybrids in their flower beds. In cold weather regions they are annuals but in climates like ours they will live forever with good care. They are popular for their showy flowers that come in a vast array of colors too numerous to list. Most non-experts incorrectly call these plants Geranium. They aren't too far off as both belong to the family Geraniaceae, but true Geranium species are usually weeds. What few people realize is that there are a large group of true species Pelargonium (not hybrids) that are winter-growing succulents well suited for cultivation in California. These are the plants that our succulent of the month is focused upon.

Pelargonium is a genus of approximately 200 species native to the African continent from South Africa to Kenya, even to Yemen. However, almost all the succulent species come from South Africa or Namibia, with the center of diversity being the Cape region. Pelargoniums are mostly winter growing succulents that are well suited for our wet-winter, dry-summer climate in California. During the growing season they have lush green leaves and attractive flowers, while during the summer time some look like dead sticks. The flowers aren't as gaudy as the horticultural hybrids, but any discerning grower will find them quite attractive. They are closely related and superficially similar looking to Monsonia (aka Sarcocaulon) but can easily be told apart by the flowers. Monsonia has flowers that "radially symmetric" meaning they are like a circle and can be equally divided in any plane. Pelargonium have "bilaterally symmetric" flowers, meaning they can only be equally divided along a single plane.

Most species are very easy to grow, if attention is paid to providing an environment very similar to their South African home. Some species, such as *P. echinatum* and *P. triste* are tolerant enough to be naturalized in the ground in Southern California when given good drainage and protected from summer watering. Many species will not go dormant if watered all summer, but the plant health and appearance both suffer. Like most cacti and succulents, when in doubt don't water! The potting mix for Pelargoniums should be well drained, with only small amounts of organic matter, if any. Fertilizer should be applied during good winter growing weather (i.e. not in the summer and not during cold, wet periods). Plants growing under these conditions will stay compact, have thick leaves, and a healthy appearance. A well grown Pelargonium will have leaves that appear to float near thick, rugged stems. If given too much water and fertilizer, they will grow leggy, and the leaves will become soft, large and droop. Plants grown hard will be healthier, and better able to survive hot summers undamaged.



Pelargonium ferulaceum



Pelargonium bloom



Pelargonium carnosum

All Pelargoniums need pruning to maintain size and shape. Pinching new growth will make the plants bushy, and develop good trunk structure. Many are self fertile, and seed is easily collected after flowering. Most are promiscuous, and garden hybrids are easily set if more than one species is in flower at a time. Seed collected in the spring and planted in late September to November germinates quickly, and will have an entire winter to grow before going dormant during the summer.

Save the Date!

LACSS SATURDAY PROGRAM WITH KEITH TAYLOR

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH 2021
HOST WILL OPEN MEETING ROOM
AT 10:00AM**

A BLAST WILL BE SENT OUT AGAIN!

Keith Taylor began collecting caudiciform succulents in 1991. His collection is more than 800 plants. He grows in plastic pots and raised beds. Keith prefers his succulents to look like habitat specimens rather than cultivated plants. He grows them hard, meaning limited water, little to no feeding and hot sun to give them that habitat look.

In 2008, Keith began creating pots to show off his plants. He believes the pot should compliment, not distract. The main focus should be the succulent. If the pot is too ornate, colorful, or shiny, it draws your eye toward the pot rather than the succulent. His pottery is sought after by C&S collectors as well as bonsai artists.

Keith sells his work at C&S clubs and shows, bonsai clubs, online through Facebook and Instagram. He accepts custom orders and ships worldwide.

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kitoi/>
Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/kitoi/>
Mail - 2228 Patterson Rd 99 Riverbank, CA 95367
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MEMBER BLURBS *and contributions*

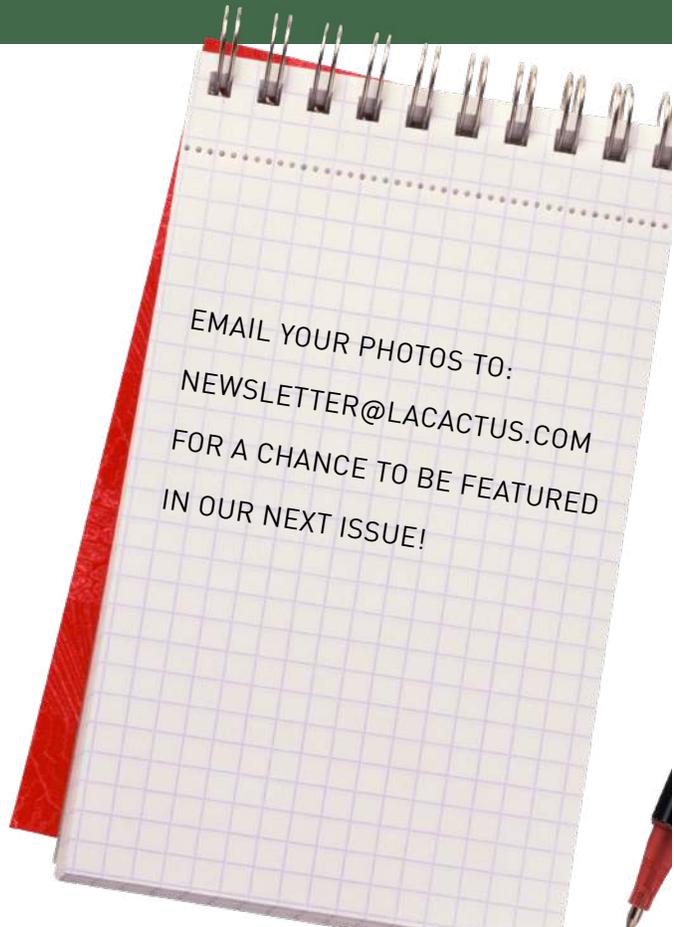
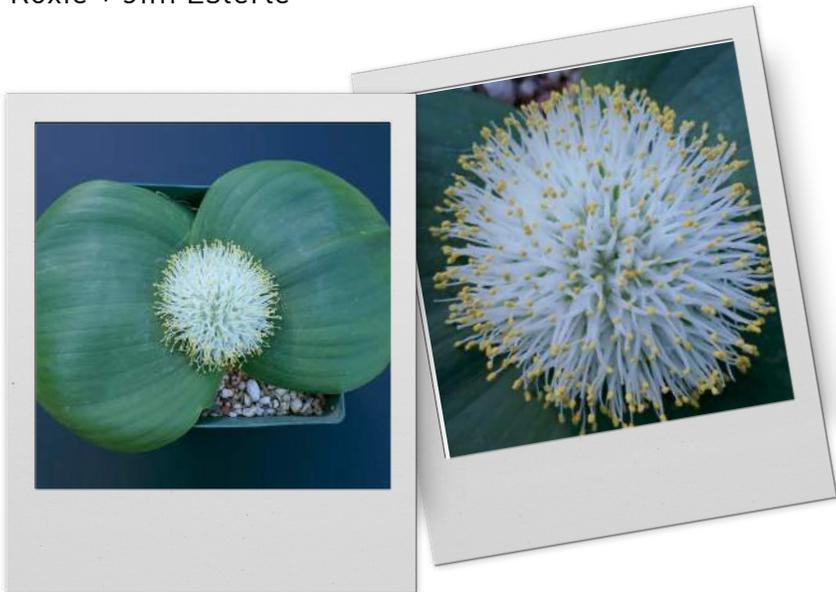
These pictures are from an general interest internet newsletter that I receive. Thought you may enjoy them.

Best,
Bryan Chan



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR YARD

Here's something special happening in our yard:
- Roxie + Jim Esterle



MOBILE PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY

by John Martinez

During these difficult times we are fortunate to have our hobby as a temporary retreat. Pre COVID, gathering with other plant enthusiasts and sharing information was a big part of our enjoyment. With the inability to hold in- person gatherings, Zoom meetings and sharing our plants through photographs has become common place.

Since modern photography equipment can be quite expensive, mobile phones cameras have become an excellent alternative.

Mobile phone cameras have come a long way in recent times and the technology keeps improving. There are many advantages to mobile phone photography.

- We carry our mobile phones with us much of the time.
- They are easy to use.
- They make it is easy to share photographs.
- Today's mobile phone cameras produce good quality images.

Below are some items to consider when using your mobile phone to take pictures.

KEEP YOUR CAMERA LENS CLEAN

Many of us have our mobile phones with us most of the time. As a result, the camera lens will accumulate dust, dirt, and smudges. Cleaning your lens by wiping it with a soft cloth will help create a clear and sharper image.



Photo shot on iPhone8

SET FOCUS

When preparing to take a photograph simply tap the screen on the most important feature of your subject. A small yellow box will appear. This will be the area of the photograph that will have the sharpest focus. If you want to change the area of sharpest focus, simply tap the screen again to change the area of sharpest focus.

ADJUST EXPOSURE

To prevent your photograph from being too dark or too light your mobile phone camera will allow you to adjust the amount of exposure. To do this tap the screen and the yellow focus box mentioned above will appear. Place your finger on the screen. Sliding your finger up will lighten the exposure, sliding your finger down will darken it.

ELIMINATE CAMERA SHAKE

Eliminating camera shake is the best way to improve image sharpness. Some suggestions include:

- Use a tripod with a mobile phone mount.
- Place your phone on a stationary object (tabletop, railing, sandbag, etc.).
- Hold your phone in both hands using a firm grip
- Steady yourself by leaning against a firm object like a tree, wall, etc.
- Place both elbows against your body to steady arms

LIGHTING

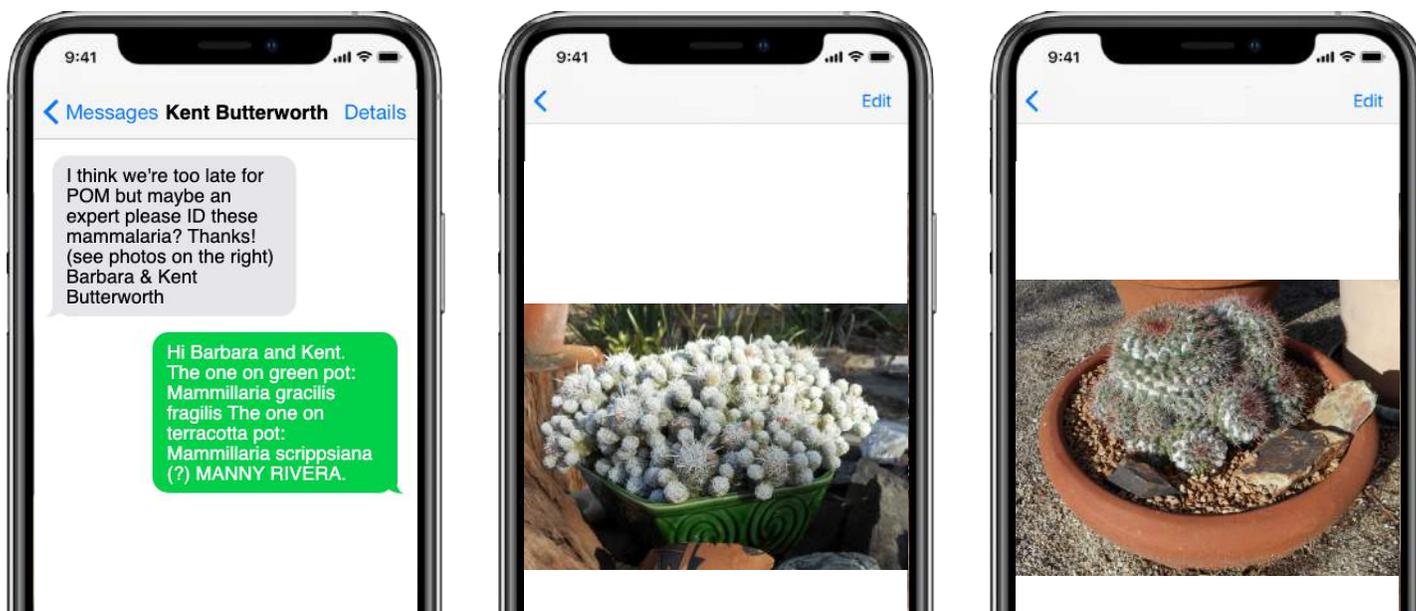
Avoid harsh lighting. The dark shadows created by harsh lighting can be distracting and will most likely reduce the impact of your image.

COMPOSITION

- Fill the frame with the subject. This is best accomplished by placing the camera closer to the subject. Using the zoom feature rather than moving the camera closer will reduce your image quality
- Place the main feature of the subject off-center. This will create a more interesting image. Activating the "Grid" function in your camera app can assist in framing your photograph.

Dear Expert,

Send in photos to ask an expert about problem plants, plants needing IDs, or "special" plants that happen to be in bloom.
Email : newsletter@lacactus.com



CSSA WEBINAR

To register:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nfxRjc1gTUKE4ZNxjZ7YGA

PROGRAM: THE AMAZING NORTH OF PATAGONIA:

A virtual journey through the province of Neuquén. The province of Neuquén is Patagonia's smallest and northernmost province in Argentina. It is not only the Patagonia of lakes and the steppe of dinosaurs. Neuquén is also the Patagonia of volcanoes and it is the country of the Mapuche people. The variety of cacti is greater here than in the rest of Patagonia. The talk will give a portrait of the cacti of this region - and the genus *Austrocactus* will take the lead. You will see the great scenery, beautiful endemic flowers, and some of the animals too, Get surprised by the beauty of the smallest Patagonian province!

BIOGRAPHIES:

Norbert and Elisabeth Sarnes, a German couple, started collecting cacti in 1977. Only in 2004, after a trip to Patagonia, they began to specialize on the genera *Austrocactus*, *Pterocactus* and *Maihueniopsis*. Many travels to Patagonia followed this first one and they made more than 50,000 km in that part of the world in search for cacti. As a result of these travels and their studies they published several articles in different journals, both German and international. Some of these publications were dedicated to first descriptions of new austrocacti and a *Pterocactus*. Their books "Cactus de Patagonia" and "Austrocactus 2015" were published in 2012 and 2015. At home in western Germany, they cultivate a collection of seed-grown Patagonian cacti on about 50 square meters. Norbert and Elisabeth are fellows of the DKG, BCSS, CSSA, Succulenta and the IOS. Between 2008 and 2017 Norbert was Vice-President of the German Cactus Association DKG, and Elisabeth is member of the ELK committee.

SUMMER AND WINTER DORMANT SUCCULENTS

(WITH EXCEPTIONS OF COURSE)

SUMMER DORMANT

MOST ARE DORMANT MAY THROUGH AUGUST.
SOME OF THESE GENERA LIKE CRASSULA AND LILIES
HAVE SOME SUMMER GROWTH.

ADROMISCHUS
AEONIUM
ALOE
ANACAMPSEROS
ASTROLOBA
AVONIA
BOWIEA
BULBINE
CERARIA
CONOPHYTUM
COTYLEDON
CRASSULA
DIOSCOREA
DUDLEYA
FOUQUERIA
GASTERIA
GIBBAEUM
GRAPTOPETALUM
GRAPTOVERIA
HAEMANTHUS
HAWORTHIA
KALANCHOE
NEOHENRICIA
OTHONNA
PACHYCORMUS
PACHYPHYTUM
PACHYVERIA
PELARGONIUM
PEPEROMIA
PORTULACARIA
SANSEVIERIA
SARCOCAULON
SEDEVERIA
SEDUM
SENECIO
STOMATIUM
TALINUM
TYLECODON

WINTER DORMANT

DORMANT FROM NOVEMBER THROUGH FEBRUARY.
SOME EXHIBIT FINAL BURST OF GROWTH IN
SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER.

ADENIA
ADENIUM
AGAVE
ALLUAUDIA
BRACHYSTEMMA
BURSERIA
CALIBANUS
CEROPEGIA
CISSUS
CYPHOSTEMMA
DIDIERIA
DORSTENIA
ECHEVERIA
ENCEPHALARTOS
EUPHORBIA
FICUS
FOCKEA
HUERNIA
IBERVILLEA
IPOMOEA
JATHROPHA
LITHOPS
MONADENIUM
MORINGA
OPERCULICARYA
PACHYPODIUM
PEDILANTHUS
PLUMERIA
PSEUDOLITHOS
PTERODISCUS
RAPHIONACME
SININGIA
STAPELIANTHUS
SYNADENIUM
TILLANDSIA
TRICHOCAULON
TRICHODIADEMA
XEROSICYOS

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