



November 2013

**Plant of the Month****Crested and Montrose****Refreshments****Letters**

I—M

**New Member**

Albert Chang

**Editor**

Phyllis Frieze

frieze.phyllis@yahoo.com

Visit Us on the web <http://www.lacss.com>**Mission Statement:**

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

**Our next general meeting is****November 7**

## **Those Darn Taxonomists! An Introduction to the Science of Plant Taxonomy for Cactus and Succulent Enthusiasts**



## **Those Darn Taxonomists! An Introduction to the Science of Plant Taxonomy for Cactus and Succulent Enthusiasts.**

You may have heard the term "taxonomy" and maybe know that when the name of your plant is changed plant taxonomists are to blame. While naming plants is an important part of taxonomy, it is just one of the many jobs of a plant taxonomist, a person who studies the evolution, classification and nomenclature of plants. In this month's talk Kyle will discuss the science of plant taxonomy and the job of a plant taxonomist. You don't have to have a scientific background to be able to understand and appreciate how interesting describing, grouping and classifying a plant can be.

Kyle Williams has been a plant fanatic since childhood. He holds a Bachelors of Science in Ornamental Horticulture from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and a Ph.D. in Botany (Plant Taxonomy and Systematics) from Duke University. These degrees reflect his long standing interest in both the cultivation and science of plants. His Ph.D. research focused on the evolution, classification, and pollination biology of gingers (Zingiberaceae), a group of plants that rival orchids in their beauty. His postdoctoral studies at Harvard University focused on a general survey of the plants of Thailand. These opportunities allowed him to do extensive field work in Thailand, Burma, China, India, Costa Rica, and other countries (mainly in Southeast Asia). While most of his work has been in tropical rainforests, he has long maintained an interest in cacti and succulents.

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*2<sup>nd</sup> VP, Plant of the Month*

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**John Noster**

**Steve Rudolf**

*Meeting Refreshments*

**Leah Imamura**

**Juana Williams**

*Monthly Drawing*

## President's Message—November 2013

### Sepulveda Garden Update

On October 26, we had our last workday at the Sepulveda Garden Center Succulent Garden dedicated to weeding and clean-up. This has been a yearlong club effort, with many of you planting, weeding, and donating plants. The garden is looking good, and next year, we will begin labeling the plants with scientific and common names and location of origin.

The *Chronicle* deadline doesn't allow me to name the October 26 volunteers, but please know how much your efforts are appreciated. And thanks, Chris Rogers, for spearheading this event.

### Mentoring Program

Many thanks to Scott Schaffer for leading a mentoring session on the Haworthia and Gasteria families this month. Thirteen members attended, and learned about hybridizing, germinating, and propagating these plants. Members also had an opportunity to see how an obsessive mathematician organizes and keeps records for his collection.

### Nominations for 2014-2015 Officers

We are happy to announce nominations for the new slate of officers for positions open for 2014 - 2015. Please see the announcement in this *Chronicle* issue. We will vote on these officers at the November 7 meeting. Thank you John Suci, Natalie Welsh, and Sandy Chase, for serving on the nominating committee.

### Holiday Party – Saturday, December 7 at 5:30 PM

So many members have already signed up for the LACSS Holiday Potluck Party that we may have to order extra tables and chairs. Thanks in advance to our expert party planner Barbara Hall for coordinating this event. The optional gift exchange will use last year's format: the more "desirable" your plant, pot, or other gift, the greater your chance to get a fabulous gift in return. The auction will feature member donations, with all proceeds going directly to our club, so please bring something special for the auction. Bring your potluck dish to share at 5:00. Sign-up for food, set up, and clean up at the November 7 meeting. Any questions? Check out the flyer in this *Chronicle* issue or contact Barbara Hall.

### Membership Renewal

It's that time of year again. Please bring your checkbook to the November 7 meeting and pay your dues for next year. Dues are still \$20.00 for individuals and \$25.00 for families. If you receive the *Chronicle* through the US Postal Service, the extra charge will be \$10.00 per year for black and white copies, reflecting postal service increases. If you pay your dues at the November meeting, you will be eligible for a special raffle at the Holiday Party!

Please remember: there is no Thursday meeting in December, as the December 7 Holiday Party replaces it.

Roxie Esterle

LACSS President

[Lacss.contact@gmail.com](mailto:Lacss.contact@gmail.com)

**DON'T MISS THE FUN!!**  
**LOS ANGELES CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY**  
**HOLIDAY PARTY**

December 7, 2013, 5:30 PM  
At the Sepulveda Garden Center  
16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino

**Potluck Dinner– Plant Auction**  
**Plant Exchange Activity**  
**Plant-of-the-Month Total Points Awards!**

Each attendee is requested to bring one side dish, salad, or dessert.  
Be sure to have all food and gifts at the center between 5-5:30 pm

We need volunteers to help set-up and clean up.

**Please call or email Barbara Hall to sign up**  
**at (818) 368-6914 or [lbcjhall@aol.com](mailto:lbcjhall@aol.com)**

- Great dinner that includes *succulent* roast turkey and ham provided by the club (PS: we need 3 cooks to prepare them.... any volunteers?)
- Recognition and prizes for Plant-of-the-Month award winners
- Plant / Gift Exchange
- Party favor plants for all participants
- Prize for the best-grown *Erioseyca heinrichiana* –bring last year's holiday plant to compete in this category
- Fabulous auction with all proceeds going to our club
- Free special raffle ticket to folks who renew their membership by December 5

**All members are invited and may bring one guest.**

# 2014 Membership Renewal Raffle



If you pay your 2014 membership before the holiday party in December, you will be eligible to participate in the Holiday Membership Raffle. The prize is this wonderful Agave Gypsophila Variegata, cv. Ivory Curlls, grown by Kelly Griffin, artistically staged by our own Artie Chavez. It is a spectacular plant, ready to be placed in your collection. Send this form to the below address or pay at the November meeting. Any questions please contact, Danielle Duboff, LACSS Membership at 805-540-0144.

## LACSS Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Additional Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership:  New Member  Renewal

Single Membership \$20 annually \$10 1/2 year (July or after)

Family Membership \$25 annually \$12.50 1/2 year (July or after)

Newsletter by U.S. Mail (\$10 postage fee in addition to the membership charge)

Send me a plastic name badge (\$9.00 each)

Cash  Check: number \_\_\_\_\_

## Cactus & Succulent - Calendar Of Upcoming Events For 2014

- February 8** San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society, Spring Show & Sale  
Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego — [Info](#) (858) 382-1797
- March 28-30** Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Show & Sale  
Friday & Saturday March 28-29 9-5 Sun. March 30 12-4  
1000 S. State College Bl., (Anaheim United Methodist Church) Anaheim [Info](#) (562) 587-3357  
South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes [Info](#) (310) 378-1953
- April 19-20** Green Scene Plant Sale—at the Fullerton Arboretum 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton 92831
- April 27** Huntington Plant Sale 10-5 Huntington Botanical Gardens  
1151 Oxford Road, San Marino (626) 405-2160
- May 4** South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale---9am-4pm  
South Coast Botanical Gardens [Info](#) (310) 833-6823
- May 4-5** Sunset Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room  
4117 Overland Ave., Culver City [Info](#) (310) 822-1783
- May 16-17** Gates Cactus & Succulent Society 33<sup>rd</sup> Show & Sale Friday & Saturday 9-4:30  
Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive Glen Avon [Info](#) (951) 360-8802
- May 17-18** Long Beach Cactus Club Plant Show & Sale 10-5  
Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Road, Long Beach [Info](#) (310) 922-6090—[www.lbcss.org](http://www.lbcss.org)
- May 24-25** Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Annual Show & Sale 10-4pm  
Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo [Info](#) (805) 237-2054, [www.centralcoastcactus.org](http://www.centralcoastcactus.org)
- June 7-8** San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society –Summer Show & Sale  
Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego [Info](#) (858) 382-1797
- June 14 & 15** Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society Drought Tolerant Plant Show & Sale 9-3:30  
Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino E-Mail [www.lacss-show.com](http://www.lacss-show.com)
- June 27-29** CSSA Annual Show & Sale –Huntington Botanical Gardens 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino,  
[Info](#) (626) 405-2160 or 2277 Plant Sales Start June 27 Show Open and Free to the Public on June 28
- July 25-27** Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Summer Show & Sale  
Friday July 25 9am-5pm, Saturday July 26 9am-5pm, Sunday 27 12-4pm  
1000 S. State College Bl., (Anaheim United Methodist Church) Anaheim, [Info](#) (949) 212-8417
- August 9-10** 29th Annual Intercity Show & Sale at The La County Arboretum, 9am-5pm Daily  
301 No. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia  
[Info](#) Tom Glavich (626) 798-2430 Or John Matthews (661) 714-1052
- August 30** Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium **All Day at the Huntington**
- September 7** Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Plant Auction -12-5  
  
Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Road, Long Beach 90615 [Info](#): (310) 922-6090
- November 4-5** San Gabriel Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale 9-4 Both Days  
LA County Arboretum 301 No. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia

# Plant of the Month

## 2013

### November

Crest-Montrose Crest-Montrose

### December

Holiday Party

## 2014

### January

Mammillaria without hooked spines  
Pelargonium

### February

Columnar Cacti  
Aloe Hybrids

### March

Opuntias (So. America)  
Agave

### April

Gymnocalycium singles  
Yucca, Nolina,  
Calibanus, Beaucarnea

### May

Buiningia, Uebelmania  
Mesembryanthemaceae  
(other than Lithops & Conophytum)

### June

Favorite, Favorite

### July

Escobaria, Corypantha  
Cucurbitaceae

### August

Obregonia, Strombo-cactus, Echinomastus  
Fockea, Raphionacme,  
Brachystelma

### September

Thelocactus  
Fouqueria

### October

Ariocarpus  
Euphorbia  
(Madagascar)

### November

Miniatures

## Plant of the Month - October Winners

### Succulent -- Crassula

#### Novice Division

First	John Sucio	Crassula ouata
Second	Ilona Buratti	Crassula peforata
Second	Sylvia Strehlo	Crassula ausensis

#### Advanced Division

First	Kim Thorpe	Crassula sp.
Second	Barbara Hall	Crassula ausensis
Third	Barbara Hall	Crassula arborescens ssp. undulatifolia
Third	Kim Thorpe	Crassula sp.

#### Open Division

Second	Artie Chavez	Crassula gollum
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### Cactus from Coahuila

#### Rookie Division

First	Danielle Duboff	Ariocarpus fissuratus
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#### Novice Division

First	Sylvia Strehlo	Ariocarpus fissuratus
Second	John Suiciu	Mammillaria luethyi
Third	Sylvia Strehlo	Thelocactus nedulans

#### Advanced Division

First	Sandy Chase	Echinocerus
Second	Cheryl White	Astrophytum myriostigma
Third	Cheryl White	Turbinocarpus krainzianus var. minimus
Third	Kim Thorpe	Ariocarpus kotschoubeyanus

## Plants of the Month: *Crested and Monstrose*

Crested and Monstrose plants are deformed versions of otherwise normal plants caused by abnormal growth. Specifically, they exhibit deformed growth caused by the growing points (called meristems) of the plants forming new tissue in an improper manner. The exact nature of the deformed growth separates crested plants from monstrose ones. While most often seen, and coveted in cacti and other succulents, crested and monstrose growth can occur in any kind of plant.

Normal plant growth takes place at a single point at the tip of each branch or stem called the apical meristem. The apical meristem produces new cells that go on to form the rest of the plant, but the meristem itself remains a single cell. This growth from a single point is why stems are generally round and regular in shape. The apical meristem also suppresses the growth of dormant meristems along the stem, especially those closest to the tip.



Crested *Euphorbia lactea*



Crested *Mammillaria geminispina*

Crested plants (also known as fasciation) are distinctive in that they grow in a linear or wavy shape. This growth can be so unusual that it can be hard to tell that a crest and normal form of a species are really the same thing! This growth form results from a mutation in the apical meristem where instead of remaining a single cell it starts forming many new apical meristems all in a horizontal row. This means that instead of one apical meristem controlling growth, you have dozens if not hundreds all trying to produce new growth at the same time. This growth could be considered regular irregularity in that line of meristems is abnormal, but they grow in an organized fashion giving us the beautiful and strange crests we grow.

Monstrose growth also results from meristems going haywire. In this case the apical meristem can no longer control and suppress the dormant lateral meristems, so they all start growing. That creates a malformed, often overly branched, plant that looks strange to some and fascinating to others.

Several factors are known to cause plants to crest or go monstrose. Sometimes a random mutation causes this. Usually this mutation is not passed on to any seeds it produces. It can also occur from a hormonal imbalance in the plant. External factors include certain fungal or bacterial infestations, or even environmental damage.



Crested *Euphorbia obesa* showing the Central line of apical meristems

## Culture of Crests and Monstrose Plants

Crested and monstrose plants are grown exactly as normal plants of the same species. Some have weak roots, and only grow well as grafts. However, others are robust growers, and do perfectly well on their own. Careful observation of the health of the plant, and comparison to healthy normal growth plants of the same species will quickly show whether grafting is necessary. You can also research your plant online or by asking other growers to find out the special needs of your particular crest or monstrose. These plants tend to be more sensitive to poor growing conditions, getting sunburn quicker, and getting unsightly brown spots more easily than normal plants of the same species. They tend to be more attractive to spider mites and mealy bugs than normal plants, and a careful eye must be kept on them to keep good growth.



Monstrose *Austrocylindropuntia subulata*

The most common method of propagation of crested plants is vegetative. Cuttings of crests are often grafted to speed growth and to preserve special growth forms. Cuttings of varieties that are on their own roots will generally root easily, as long as the cuts are taken during the growing season. After a few days drying, the cut sections are simply stuck into slightly moist potting soil. After a few weeks, there will be sufficient roots to resume normal watering.



Crests are not limited to succulents, as seen in this Daisy inflorescence



*Agave geminiflora* with Crested inflorescence

## Propagation of Crested Plants

In most cases, Crests and Monstrose plants flower and produce seed, just as other plants do, but less often. Good strong growth is probably the best way to produce a flowering crest. Crests and Monstrosity are not generally transmitted by seed; however, seed from a genetic mutant plant (i.e. not from pathogens or environmental factors) is much more likely to be a genetic mutant than that from a normal plant. The genetic mutation is more likely to be the same as the parent, but any other mutation is also possible.



Monstrose *Lithops* species

Kyle Williams  
Special Thanks to Tom Glavich

Photo Credits: J.G. Howes, Perduejn, Frank Vincentz, Joe Mabel, Dave Pape, Xenomorph, Maureen Gilmer



Baobab, baobab....wherefore art thou, Baobab?

Our last new book for the year provides us the answer to the above query. Apparently nowhere in the northern hemisphere. **“Australian Bottle Trees and Boabs”** by Attila Kapitany gives us a great overview of this very exotic tree. Baobab is the common name of the genus *Adansonia*, which has only eight species worldwide with only one being described in this book. More coverage is given to four species of the genus *Brachychiton*. Following the individual plant descriptions is a section comparing the structure and shape of stems, leaves, flowers, and fruit of the two genera. Leaf structure varies with age with the *Brachychiton* species so identification is tricky. Cultivation is discussed but I think the size of the trees would make it impractical for most of us to consider that option. The descriptions are accompanied by excellent photos. This is a wonderful book that will make all of us want to see these unusual giants in person.

The latest issue of the CSSA Journal is now available. The entire issue is designated as a *“Special Issue: northwest Argentina.”* Seven articles by seven different authors on seven aspects of touring this beautiful, rugged area! One is authored by Guillermo Rivera, last month’s speaker. Because this is a designated “Special Issue,” this Journal will be available in the regular Journal Library collection and also in our sub-set of CSSA Journals called “Special Issues.” The first issue of our *Aloe Journal* was mailed to us in a real envelope with real stamps. If any of our members are also philatelists and have an interest in these stamps, stop by the Library table. November is the last chance this year for you to check out a book and not have to return it until next year. So make sure to stop by the Library table and

## CHECK IT OUT.

### GARDEN TOUR By Ilona Ubratti

It is always a pleasure for our members to visit the homes and gardens of our fellow members.

How you do it, and what you can do with what you have learned about Haworthia and Gasteria at Scott Schaffer’s garden and nursery.

Scott judiciously used his property to display, protect and nurture his seedlings and plants. All of us can do this! Scott shared his various planting mediums, portions of each one, watering, shade and healthy growing habits. as well as how he cares for his cuttings.

Using shade covers was reinforced for me, *again*...why I didn’t believe that succulents need shade, well...I am a newbie... You may want to ask Scott about the shade cover he uses. It is different from what I have seen.

I am glad his garden and creative storage and growing areas were available for viewing and gaining useful information for all attending. It was also interesting that Scott is able to extend his hobby to include the sales of his “babies”. I was sorry that none were ready, yet, for adoption. I, for one, would have loved a souvenir of the morning outing.

Thank You Scott...

## LACSS Mentoring Program: A Great Success Rosemary Ecker, student

Thank you Steve Frieze from your eleven students attending the mentor program at your home! The program was a great success and helped to answer many questions posed by the students. The 2 hour session covered special tools for working with cacti and succulents, soil composition, protecting plants from frost and excessive sun, watering schedules and pests' identification and their control. Steve emphasized his points by showing samples in his wonderful garden and at his teaching station on the patio. Two students brought "problem" plants. One plant turned out to be a beautiful example of what we strive for in competition and inspired cacti envy. Too bad we all don't have that "problem" plant. Students ready with new knowledge had the opportunity to purchase additions to their collections and ask more questions. We all came away with the encouragement to compete monthly in the specimen competition. It's great to have experts who are willing to share so readily with others and promote the love of these plants.



Danielle Duboff and Leah lamura



Leah lamura

## Remembering Betty Gay

Nils Schirmmacher

Betty Gay passed away on October -- in her Woodland Hills home at the Motion Picture and Television Country House. She was 94. Betty and her husband Ed were leading members of the LACSS and CSSA from the late 1950s through the mid 90s. The couple's extensive Baja fieldwork is reflected in two species bearing their names, and their mentoring efforts inspired a generation who now oversee many of our meetings, shows, and sales. For a full account of the Gays' history, see *Trekking with Ed and Betty* in the September and October 2012 *Chronicles*.

I'd like to honor Betty by reprinting an article she wrote for the April 1960 *Chronicle*, describing her and Ed's search for *Utahia sileri* (aka *Pediocactus sileri*). For those who knew the Gays, the article provides an opportunity to share an Arizona sunset with old friends; for those meeting Betty for the first time, it introduces her voice and the keen eye she applied to work in the field. Betty's discerning eye was her hallmark; it is no accident she was an accountant by trade. The trait not only helped to locate specimens, it also served her as club treasurer and newsletter editor.

Before you begin, a word of caution: this article contains explicit reference to field collecting. Betty represents a time when cactiphiles obtained their collections with a shovel, an era that ended several decades ago.

Both the LACSS and the CSSA forbid the taking of plants from habitat. But the point of reprinting Betty's article is to revive ecological arguments. Underlying the many descriptions of journeys taken by the Gays is this message: "Our plants have been shaped by the environments in which they evolved; learn the relationship between organism and habitat and you will be connected to their place of origin."



### Born With Mixed Emotions

Ed and Betty Gay

Written by Betty Gay

UTAHIA SILERI- "a solitary spherical found in the vicinity of Pipe Springs

arrived in the Pipe Springs Monument area in mid-afternoon on a cold, windy winter day. We spent several hours of fruitless searching for this *Utahia sileri*. Then suddenly and nearly simultaneously we both shouted with glee. However, our enthusiasm proved to be quite short lived. After a few minutes of close inspection, it became obvious that we had each found a *Coryphantha* of the vivipara complex. This was not too apparent at first because of the very large tubercles and the rather long, heavy spines, fitting the description of our quarry, the Utahia.

Our disappointment was as suddenly wiped away when we looked up to find ourselves enveloped in another beautiful Arizona sunset. The red cliffs with their many outcroppings of white gypsum were a dramatic backdrop for the chocolate beige hues of the rocky promontories surrounding us. Then came over us an eerie and all-alone sensation that only a lover of the desert and one who knows it can really savor.

Now we realized it was far too late for photography and that it would soon be dark. As we hastily walked toward our car, another wave of enthusiasm overtook us-- but, alas, this too was only another *Coryphantha*. Traveling toward the distant lights of Fredonia, we decided to stay there for the night and try again the following day.

Next morning, cold and early, but well fed, we returned along the same dusty wash-bordered road to a spot close to where we had been the night before. After numerous stops, much futile searching, and many breaks to counter the cold, we made our decision. We would return to our given land marker. We would recheck for the exact area where we had been told Utahias could be found. We would take one last look before giving up. Then, upon retracing, we found that we had already explored that particular area. Half-heartedly we drove on for another few hundred yards and pulled to a stop. This would be our last chance this trip.

Then, it came. After over a mile of searching through the sagebrush our efforts were rewarded...or were they? But, there it was-- a pathetic little unphotogenic two-inch specimen. Worse yet, its roots were almost gone from oxonian root rot. We cleaned away all the apparent ravages and replanted the little fellow under the nurse plant protection of another sagebrush. Now, many months later, we find ourselves wondering-- did it make it?

But now our hands were covered with this scourge of many alluvial soils. They must be cleaned, yet we had no water. Only one answer, so off to a nearby hillside we went. After all, hadn't Eddie's training as a Boy Scout taught him how to clean and scour his hands with the clean sun-bleached desert sands! Again and again we plunged our hands into the fine deep sand, and scrubbed them until we felt that they were sufficiently clean.

We had just turned and walked away when- there it was!- the monarch of them all. Yes, a giant *Utahia* eight inches wide by twelve inches in height, growing on a low hillside ledge. During countless years the soil had been washed and blown away from its base, leaving some of its large, gnarled roots exposed. First: some photos and color slides that dwarfed the king-sized cigarette by comparison. Then--after all--our "Arizona" planter needed a *Utahia* to help complete the collection, and what an unbelievable specimen this was! Yet, *should* this plant be moved? They *are* temperamental and especially so with any fully mature cactus. We discussed the matter between ourselves. What an enviable cactus we could have, just for the taking, with not another human being within miles. Yet the thought of moving this ancient veteran had an aspect of outright banditry. We looked at each other with mixed emotions and turned and walked away. With considerable satisfaction though, we agreed that we felt that after more than fifteen thousand collecting miles we had finally graduated from the over-eager class of amateur collectors.

Then a startling thought struck us. We had been told that the *Utahia* grow in the red clay flats, yet here we were in the white gypsum, so, could the parent of our mighty monarch be even higher up or on another nearby slope? Up the hillside we scrambled, and no sooner had we reached the summit than we both let out wild yells of joy. Here they were in mass profusion- some to five, six, seven-inch heights. Still more surprisingly, though some were solitary, most were caespitose.

More photographs, a few specimens, and with gladness in our hearts we descended to bid a fond farewell to the monarch sentinel, but again with another sort of mixed emotions.



Ed & Betty Gay



*Utahia sileri* (pediocactus)



Mailing Address  
LACSS  
PO BOX 280581  
Northridge, CA 91328

Phone: 818-749-5346

E-mail: lacss.conct@gmail.com

## **General Meeting**

**November 7**

**Those Darn Taxonomists! An Introduction to the Science of Plant  
Taxonomy for Cactus and Succulent Enthusiasts  
Presented by Kyle Williams**

## **November 2013 Sales and Events**

**November 2 & 3 San Gabriel Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale  
9:00 AM-5PM LA County Arboretum  
301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA**