



# DRY TIMES

VOL. 111

SEPTEMBER 2011

No. 8

President: Rosalie Gorchoff  
(310) 822-1783

Editor: Nels Christianson  
(310) 396-1231

nchristianson@mednet.ucla.edu

**September meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 6, 2011**  
**7:30 pm**

**Burton W. Chace County Park**  
**13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey**

## **PROGRAM**

***Namibia***  
***by Tim Harvey***

## **PLANT OF THE MONTH**

***CACTUS:***  
**Copiapoa, Matucana**

***SUCCULENT:***  
**Bursera, Commiphora, Operculicaria**

Tim Harvey will speak on his adventures in Namibia. Tim moved to Canada from England in 1994 and two years later came to California. He has a nursery in the Ventura area. Sunset members have seen his interesting plant selections, including Aloe species and hybrids, bulbs, and succulent trees, at former meetings and at last year's show and sale. Tim has recently joined the board of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. He has been involved in the Huntington's new tissue culture program of succulent plants about which he spoke at an earlier Club meeting. He will bring plants to sell.

**\*\* If your last name begins with letter H-M, please bring goodies to munch on at the break. Thank you!**

*The members of Sunset Succulent Society express their sincere condolences to the family of Gary Hammer who died tragically in Phoenix on August 7, 2011. He contributed immensely over the years to plant hobbyists with explorations, habitat updates, new introductions, cultivation expertise and his boundless energy. The plants he offered for sale were always choice and singularly beautiful. We will miss him greatly.*

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

September 3, Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium, all day at the Huntington.  
 September 25, Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Plant Auction, 18127 S. Alameda St., Rancho Dominguez, CA at 12 noon.  
 November 5-6, San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia  
 December 2-4, Orange County Cactus and Succulent Winter Show and Sale, Sale Dec. 2, 3, 4 10am-4pm each day, show Saturday and Sunday 10 am- 4pm, Fuller Arboretum, 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton, contact Vince Basta 714-267-4329

**SUNSET SUCCULENT SOCIETY CELEBRATES 50 YEARS IN 2011 !!**

Being a member of a cactus and succulent society has many benefits, from educational to social. One of the prime ways by which an individual can learn about plants, geography, habitat, cultivation and staging is by attending a monthly meeting. Over the years Sunset Succulent Society has had very prominent and knowledgeable speakers from the world of cacti and succulents. Some of the oldtimers that spoke here were, Bob Carr, Lillian True, Juan Chaninian, Charles Glass, Millie Stern, Alfred Lau, Jerry Barad, Fred Lenert, Marlene Rainman, Myron Kimnach, John Bleck and Seymour Linden ('Travels in Somalia' October 2000). The insights and information shared were almost limitless and quite inspiring. During the ten years our current Editor has been at the job our Society has had the following impressive and enlightening speakers and programs. What better way to cultivate enthusiasm among members! The Society thanks these speakers for being part of our history:

January 2001	Epiphyllum Slide Show with Music	Ken Loomis
February 2001	Northern Baja California	Jim Hanna
March 2001	The Pickoffs' Mammillarias	Brigitte Williams
April 2001	Superb Succulents	Duke Benadom
May 2001	CSSA Slide Show	Brigitte Williams
June 2001	Cacti & Succulents Northern Mexico	Woody Minnich
September 2001	Lithops and Mesemb Workshop	Larry Grammer
October 2001	Travels in South Africa	Jim Hanna
November 2001	Over the Andes	John Bleck
January 2002	Anza Borrego Desert State Park	Gary James
February 2002	Discovering Borneo	Laurel Woodley
March 2002	Slides Selections from CSSA	Brigitte Williams
April 2002	Potting Demonstration	Karen Ostler
May 2002	Barbecue Celebration of Show	
June 2002	A Trip to Mexico	Vince Basta
September 2002	Succulent Treasures of the Winter Rainfall Area of Namibia & S Africa	Guy Wrinkle
October 2002	The Succulent Karoo of SW Africa	Rob Skillin
November 2002	Winter Growers	Karen Ostler
January 2003	Species of Epiphytic Cacti	Dick Kohlschreiber
February 2003	Turbincarpus of Mexico	Woody Minnich
March 2003	Diversity & Density in Northern	

April 2003	Chihuahuan Desert Staging	Gary Duke Larry Grammer
May 2003	Celebration of Successful Show	
June 2003	Honeymoon in Namibia	Petra Crist
September 2003	Report on the CSSA Convention	Guy Wrinkle
October 2003	Succulents of the Canary Islands	Joe Clemens
November 2003	South African Geophytes	Tom Glavich
January 2004	A Trip Through N Minas Gerais, Brazil	Nels Christianson
February 2004	Introduction to Succulent Growing	Tom Glavich
March 2004	A Walk Through Memory Lane	Brigitte Williams
April 2004	Potting Workshop	Karen Ostler
May 2004	BBQ Celebration of Show & Sale	
June 2004	The Jewels of Mexico	Woody Minnich
September 2004	Namibia and N South Africa	Gary James
October 2004	Succulent Bromeliads	Tom Glavich
November 2004	Madagascar 2004	Guy Wrinkle
January 2005	Traveling through Namaqualand	Laurel Woodley
February 2005	Exploring Northern Argentina	Woody Minnich
March 2005	CSSA Takes a Look at Chile	Gary James
April 2005	Potting and Staging Workshop	Karen Ostler
May 2005	Celebration of Successful Show	
June 2005	The Garden of Patrick Anderson and Les Olson in Fallbrook	Nels Christianson
September 2005	The Art of Growing Plants	Guy Wrinkle
October 2005	Islands in the Sea of Cortez, Baja Calif	Gary James
January 2006	Summer Rainfall Area of Namibia	Petra Crist
February 2006	Bolivia to Patagonia	Woody Minnich
March 2006	Venezuela: Andes to the Tipuis	Laurel Woodley
April 2006	Gasteria	Tom Glavich
June 2006	Flora of Argentina	Guillermo Rivera
September 2006	Geophytic Pelargoniums & Friends	Tom Glavich
October 2006	Opuntia and its Relatives	Charles Spotts
November 2006	Galapagos Islands & Their Flora	Gary James
January 2007	Plants of Costa Rica	HankWarzybok
February 2007	unrecorded	
March 2007	Landscaping with Succulents	Michael Buckner
April 2007	Repotting for the Show	Karen Ostler
May 2007	No meeting	
June 2007	Dinner out at the Ramada	
September 2007	Succulent Pruning Demonstration	Artie Chavez
October 2007	Flora of Namibia	Petra Crist
November 2007	Round About the 2007 Convention	Laurel Woodley
January 2008	No meeting	
February 2008	Revisiting Madagascar	Gary James
March 2008	A Month in Madagascar	Kelly Griffin
April 2008	Getting Plants Ready for Show	Larry Grammer
May 2008	Cacti of Central Brazil	Guillermo Rivera
June 2008	BBQ Celebration of Show & Sale	

September 2008	Ecology of E Central Brazil	Gary James
October 2008	Traveling in the State of Bahia, Brazil	Nels Christianson
November 2008	What Cactus is That?	Gary Duke
January 2009	Namibia	Tim Harvey
February 2009	Return to Brazil: Bahia & Minas	Woody Minnich
March 2009	Techniques for Potting & Presentation	Karen Ostler
April 2009	Peru: Land of the Incas	Guillermo Rivera
May 2009	BBQ Celebration of Show & Sale	
June 2009	A Visual Tour of the 2009 Tucson Convention	Laurel Woodley & Nels Christianson
September 2009	Photographing Succulent Plants	Rene and Patty Caro
October 2009	Mexico: Off the Beaten Path	Julia Etter & Martin Kristen
November 2009	Succulent Plants in Winter	Karen Ostler
January 2010	Epiphyllums & Their Propagation	Tony Yanko
February 2010	A Question of Sex	Tim Harvey
March 2010	Exploratory Trip to NW Argentina	Guillermo Rivera
April 2010	Preparing for the Show	Karen Ostler
May 2010	BBQ Celebration of Show & Sale	
June 2010	A Trip to Jalisco & Guerrero Mexico	Guy Wrinkle
September 2010	The Wonderful World of Shows	Laurel Woodley
October 2010	Haworthia Up Close & Personal	John Matthews
November 2010	Cacti & Succulents Southern Brazil	Woody Minnich
January 2011	Lake Natron and Environs	Duke Benadom
February 2011	Ecuador and the Galapagos	Stan Kamin
March 2011	The Succulents of Yemen	Woody Minnich
April 2011	Preparing for the Show	Karen Ostler
May 2011	No meeting	
June 2011	Anza-Borrego Desert State Park	Laurel Woodley

**PLANT OF THE MONTH 2011**

**CACTUS**

**SUCCULENT**

September	Copiapoa, Matucana	Bursera, Operculicaria, Commiphora
October	Melocactus	Succulent Crests
November	Ariocarpus	Pelargonium, Sarcocaulon

June 2011 Succulents of the Month –

***Bursera, Commiphora and Operculicarya***

This month's succulents are a study in convergent evolution of pachycaul (swollen trunk) shrubs.

*Bursera* are plants from the New World, while *Commiphora* are from the Old World. *Operculicarya* are from Madagascar.

All have similar cultivation requirements. They do best when watered in the summer in Southern California. They will all tolerate being left unprotected, outdoors during the winter rains, although some of the *Commiphora* (particularly ones

coming from the tropics and Madagascar are very sensitive to freezing temperatures, and need protection when temperatures approach the mid thirties. Any standard succulent mix will do as a potting medium. Growth is much more rapid when they are fed. They will really take off when put into the ground and quickly try to become trees! All of the plants do well when treated as bonsai, and pruned to expose the geometry of the trunk and bark.



*Bursera faragoides*, photo T. Nomer

*Bursera* is a widespread genus, with a range that extends from California into South America. Many of the species are beautiful trees with red or brown peeling bark, rarely seen in cultivation. Most *Bursera* are aromatic, with wonderful woody fragrance from their leaves and bark. Species frequently seen are *Bursera faragoides* (shown above), *Bursera microphylla*, with very small leaves, *Bursera multijuglans* (with red peeling bark), and *Bursera simplex*.

*Commiphora* are the African equivalent. *Commiphora* is also a widespread genus, stretching from South Africa through tropical Africa the Arabian Peninsula and Madagascar. Many of the species have peeling bark, although the color tends to run more towards the yellow and gray than red. Vigorous growth is also found in well-fed and watered plants. *Commiphora* are aromatic, with fragrances that manage to be both similar and different to *Bursera*. *Commiphora pyracanthoides* is similar to some of the tall growing *Bursera*, and is easily grown from seed. Named species are beginning to appear on seed lists and nursery catalogs. The genus is understudied, and there are many species unknown or unidentified.

*Operculicarya* is a Madagascan species that is the classic succulent Bonsai. It has great wrinkled trunks, gnarly roots and naturally tiny leaves.

Tom Glavich, November 2004

## Cactus of the Month – September 2011 – *Copiapoa*

*Copiapoa* is a unique genus of spectacular plants from to the North Coast of Chile. The genus has no close relatives, and is confined to a region of ecological change, becoming steadily drier for the past several hundred years. The Southern limit of *Copiapoa* is where reliable winter rains can be found, while the Northern limit is the tropical region of reliable summer rains. *Copiapoa* live along the coast and through the river valleys cut through the coastal mountains. Some of the species live completely on dense fogs that appear regularly for months at a time.

The hills and valleys of Northern Chile are still not well explored from a botanical point of view, and new species are still being described and additional species will be found in the future.

Given these extreme conditions, one would expect the cultivation of these plants in Southern California, with our frequent winter rains, fogs, and “June gloom” to be quite a challenge. Fortunately, this is not so, and *Copiapoa* are relatively easy to grow. They respond happily to the same potting mix, watering, and fertilization as most cacti, growing many times faster

than they would in habitat. Some species can even be grown in the open, as long as the soil is well drained. They do tend to be slower growers than many.

*Copiapoa* are easily propagated from cuttings or division of clumps. Seed is available from the CSSA seed bank, and most cactus seed houses, and germinates quickly in the spring. They should be started in a moist potting soil, and moved to drier surroundings after germination.



*Copiapoa* were first collected in the 1840s, and described as *Echinocactus*, then the home of anything more or less globular. The genus *Copiapoa* was named by Britton and Rose in 1922 in their great work **The Cactaceae**. The name derives from the Chilean province of Copiapó, home to many of the species.

All of the *Copiapoa* are worth growing. This is a genus unparalleled in excellent species.

Tom Glavich, September 2003



Matucana pujupati at the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden  
photo by N. Christianson

**About DRY TIMES**

*DRY TIMES* is published monthly by the *Sunset Succulent Society* (SSS), whose officers are:

<b>President</b>	<b>Rosalie Gorchoff</b>	<b>(310) 822-1783</b>	<b>Vice Pres.</b>	<b>Brigitte Williams</b>	<b>(818) 352-4531</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Peggy Oberg</b>	<b>(310) 645-7946</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Brigitte Williams</b>	
		<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres., Plant of the Month</b>		<b>Laurel Woodley</b>	

Material for publication in the newsletter must be in the Editors' hands by the 1st day of the publication month (e.g., by Aug. 1 for the next issue). Articles and letters may be edited for space and clarity. Editorial comment and signed articles are the opinions of the Editor or author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Board of Directors of the Society, an affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc. Unless expressly denied in a note with the article, all material in the newsletter may be reprinted by non-profit organizations, provided that proper credit is given to the SSS and the author, and that one copy of the publication containing the reprinted material be sent to the Editors. Reproduction in whole or in part by any other organization or publication without the permission of the SSS is prohibited.