



# DRY TIMES

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No. 4

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**April meeting  
Tuesday, April 3, 2012  
7:30 pm**

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

## **PROGRAM**

***Preparing for the Show***  
**Karen Ostler**

## **PLANT OF THE MONTH**

***CACTUS:***  
**Astrophytum**

***SUCCULENT:***  
**Pelargonium, Sarcocaulon**

Karen Ostler returns to give the members an inspiring presentation of preparing plants and pots for the Club's show and sale in May. The judging criteria are: Condition - 70%, Size and degree of maturity and difficulty of culture - 15%, Staging and grooming - 10% and nomenclature - 5%. Karen will be highlighting the 10% that is staging and grooming which will often be the determining factor in one plant winning against another. If you would like to bring in a plant that you are considering entering in the show, either to be repotted or just for advice from Karen, feel free to do so.

Karen has been involved in the cactus and succulent scene in Southern California for over thirty-five years and has been a tireless advocate for these plants. She has served as show chair for Sunset and CSSA where her enthusiasm over the years has been invaluable in encouraging members to enter plants and to participate in other aspects of the hobby in general.

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

Last month Woody Minnich gave a beautiful presentation of his 2011 trip to Namibia after a very heavy rainfall season which resulted in a resurgent display of unique flora.

### Cactus of the Month, April 2012 - *Astrophytum*

*Astrophytum* are often one of the first cacti a collector starts with. They are available for pennies (or now quarters) in discount stores, groceries, and home centers. How can anyone resist the \$1.29 special speckled Bishop's Cap? More than a few show plants started out this way. At the same time, growing a perfect, 10 or 20 year old specimen plant is a challenge few growers can master. Fortunately, the genus offers rewards and surprises at every level between, making it one of the most popular of cacti at all levels.



*Astrophytum capricorne* exhibited by Laura Oster in the 2001 Inter-city Show

*Astrophytum* are native to Southern Texas and Northern Central Mexico. They grow in a very arid region, with a porous mineral soil. One of the cultivation difficulties with *Astrophytum* is their tendency to split open from sudden increases in soil moisture level. To avoid this, keep them in a soil that is very quick to drain, and which has little organic matter. A mixture of pumice and gravel or very coarse sand, with only a little potting soil is best for these plants.



*Astrophytum asterias* exhibited by Carol and Paul Maker in the 2001 Inter-city Show

*Astrophytum asterias* is the smallest of the species. It is the hardest to grow well, prone to splitting if over watered.

*Astrophytum capricorne* is generally the longest spined species.

*Astrophytum myriostigma* is the well known 'Bishops Cap.'

*Astrophytum ornatum* from Hidalgo can grow to 12 inches in diameter and three feet in height.

#### References:

Anderson, E. **The Cactus Family**

Cullman, Gotz and Groner, **The Encyclopedia of Cacti**

Tom Glavich June 2002

Photos T. Nomer

## Succulent of the Month, April 2012 - *Sarcocaulon* and *Pelargonium*

*Pelargonium* and *Sarcocaulon* are two succulent genera of the *Geraniaceae* family. *Sarcocaulon* is native to South Africa and Namibia, and *Pelargonium* is centered there, but with outlier species appear as far away as Kenya and Yemen. Most of the succulent species come from South Africa or Namibia.



***Pelargonium gibbosum***

*Pelargoniums* are mostly winter growing succulents. They are dormant in the summer, and at this time some look like dead sticks. 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.

*Sarcocaulon* is a small genus of about 14 species. Growing conditions for *Sarcocaulon* are identical to those for *Pelargonium*, however most require a drier summer environment for best growth.

The potting mix for *Pelargoniums* and *Sarcocaulon* should be well drained, with only small amounts of organic matter. Fertilizer should be applied sparingly, and only during good (bright and warm) growing weather. A potting mix recommended by Michael Vassar is 50% pumice, 35% washed builder's sand and 15% leaf mold based planter mix. 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. 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.

References: J. J. A. van der Walt, **Pelargoniums of Southern Africa (3 vols.)**, D. Miller, **Pelargoniums**

**The CSSA needs volunteers for its display table at South Coast Plaza's Southern California Spring Garden Sale from April 26-29. Please let Laurel Woodley know. Thank you. Show info at [www.springgardenshow.com/](http://www.springgardenshow.com/)**

**PLANT OF THE MONTH 2012**

**CACTUS**

**SUCCULENT**

April	Astrophytum
May	Parodia (Notocactus)
June	Echinopsis
September	Ariocarpus, Leuchtenbergia
October	Ferocactus, Echinocactus
November	Melocactus, Buiningia, Discocactus

Pelargonium, Sarcocaulon
Euphorbia – Madagascar
Pachypodium, Adenium
Stapelia, Fockea, Raphionacme
Dudleya, Echeveria
Crassula, Sedum

**March 2012 Plant of the Month Winners**

**Junior Cactus**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Lee Freehling	Mammillaria bombycina
No 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> place awards		

**Senior Cactus**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Mammillaria magnifica</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Mammillaria bombycina</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Nels Christianson	<i>Mammillaria mazatlanensis</i>

**Junior Succulent**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	John Luhnnow	<i>Cheiridopsis umdausensis</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	John Luhnnow	<i>Cheiridopsis purpurea</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	John Luhnnow	<i>Cheiridopsis candidissima</i>

**Senior Succulent**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Karen Ohlinder	<i>Cheiridopsis pillansii</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	John Matthews	<i>Conophytum minimum cv. Wittebergense</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	John Matthews	<i>Conophytum obcordellum cv. Lambertense</i>
	Laurel Woodley	<i>Conophytum blandum</i>

The March POM judges were Coni Nettles and John Luhnnow accompanied by Woody Minnich.



*Astrophytum myrostrigma*, photo by N. Christianson

## UPCOMING EVENTS

April 7 & 8, South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at South Coast Botanic Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA, info. 310-832-2262.

April 14 & 15, Green Scene Plant Sale, at The Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton CA 92831.

May 5 & 6, Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City CA, info. 310-822-1783.

May 6, South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale, 9am-4:30 pm, South Coast Botanical Gardens, info. 310-833-6823.

May 13, Huntington Plant Sale, 10 am – 5 pm, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino CA, info. 626-405-2160.

May 18 & 19, Gates Cactus and Succulent Society, 31<sup>st</sup> Show and Sale, Fri & Sat 9 am – 4:30 pm, Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA, info. 951-360-8802.

May 26 & 27, Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Show and Sale, 10 am – 4 pm, Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo, CA, info. 805-237-2054, [www.centralcoastcactus.org](http://www.centralcoastcactus.org)

June 2 & 3, San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Summer Show and Sale, Balboa Park, Room 101, info. 858-382-1797.

June 9 & 10, Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Plant Show and Sale, 9<sup>th</sup> from 9 am – 5 pm, 10<sup>th</sup> from 9 am – 3:30 pm, Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino CA, info.

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

June 29 – July 1, CSSA Annual Show and Sale, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino

info. 626-405-2160 or 2277. Plant sales start June 29 thru July 1<sup>st</sup>, show opens June 30 thru July 1, free.

July 27 – 28, Orange County Cactus and Succulent Society Summer Show and Sale, Friday, July 27 noon to 7pm, Saturday, July 28, 9am to 5pm, 1000 S. State College Blvd., Anaheim (Anaheim United Methodist Church). Contact Vince Basta, 714-267-4329.

August 11 – 12, 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Intercity Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 9am-5pm daily, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia. Info. call Tom Glavich, 626-798-2430 or John Matthews 661-297-5364.

Sept. 1, Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium, all day at The Huntington.

Sept. 23, Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Plant Auction, 18127 S. Alameda St., Rancho Dominguez, 12pm

November 3 – 4, San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum.

November 9 – 10, Orange County Cactus and Succulent Winter Show and Sale, 9am-5pm, 1000 S. State College Blvd, Anaheim. Contact Vince Basta, 714-267-4329.



Pelargonium cotyledonis, photo by N. Christianson

**SUNSET SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW SCHEDULE for MAY 5 – 6, 2012**  
**Garden Room, Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA**

<b>Friday, May 4</b>	<b>Set Up</b>	<b>2:00 to 8:00</b>
<b>Saturday, May 5</b>	<b>Sale</b>	<b>10:00 to 5:00</b>
<b>Sunday, May 6</b>	<b>Sale</b>	<b>10:00 to 4:00</b>
<b>Sunday, May 6</b>	<b>Takedown</b>	<b>4:00 to 6:00</b>

All exhibitors must be a member of the SUNSET SUCCULENT SOCIETY. Each exhibitor must enter all plants in either the NOVICE division or the ADVANCED division. These are judged separately. Division placement is based on points from prior CSSA and SUNSET annual shows. Points are accumulated as follows: First Place: 5 points; Second Place: 3 points; Third Place: 1 point. A Collection accumulates double points. A NOVICE exhibitor has won NO more than 149 points. ADVANCED is 150 points or more. Exhibitors who have shown less than 10 plants in ALL previous SUNSET shows are eligible for the ROOKIE OF THE YEAR Trophy.

Each exhibitor may enter an unlimited number of plants, each of which must have been grown by the exhibitor for at least six months prior to the show. Each entry must be clean, dry, and healthy and free of weeds, debris, insects, disease and pesticide odor. Plant labels in pots must be removed. Grafted plants; so marked, are accepted within any category. Hybrids, (except where indicated) may be entered in the category of either parent. Entry constitutes permission to photograph and, if necessary, move plants. The show committee may remove any plant that detracts from the Show or jeopardize the health of other entries.

Plants should be set in place as early as possible after 3:00 pm on Friday. All entries must be in place by 8:00 pm and remain there until 4:00 pm, Sunday. Exhibitors are responsible for placing his/her plants with an accurate name and a completed entry tag in the proper classes. NOVICE tags are yellow. ADVANCED tags are purple. The show registrar will help exhibitors as needed.

Plants in classes 01-97 must be individual, potted specimens; i.e. one physically connected plant per container. Rocks and other natural objects are allowed only as adjuncts to a plant. Pot size refers to the inside diameter of the pot; in irregular pots, the average diameter. Crests and monstrose plants may only appear in classes 94 and 95. Variegated plants must appear in classes 96 and 97; with the exception of Gasteria and Sansevierias; which may appear there or in their respective classes. "Miniature" refers to an intrinsic species characteristic, namely, diminutive heads, rosettes or stems at maturity;

i.e. not small, stunted or immature plants of normal species; and must be in pots with a diameter of 3” or less. A Collection consists of 5 to 10 individually potted and identified plants of one genus or other common characteristic, e.g. “Baja Succulents” or “monstrose cacti”; the award carries double points. A Display forms a broad, unjudged ‘other’ group for plants not covered in classes 01-101. A Display entry requires prior arrangement with the show registrar.

The Society and the show committee will take the utmost care to safeguard entries but cannot be held responsible for damage to, or loss of, plants or other property. Except in judging, the show registrar’s decisions are final.

### ***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) 455-1246</b>
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		<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 Editor. Reproduction in whole or in part by any other organization or publication without the permission of the SSS is prohibited.