



# DRY TIMES

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No. 2

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**February meeting  
Tuesday, February 2, 2016  
7:30 pm**

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

## PROGRAM

*The High Drakensbergs of Lesotho and South Africa*  
Tom Glavich

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

*CACTUS:*  
*Crested, Monstrose*

*SUCCULENT:*  
*Pelargonium, Sarcocaulon*

Tom Glavich will present a program on the High Drakensberg Mountains of South Africa. Tom is a member of the San Gabriel Cactus and Succulent Society and is a director on the board of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. Tom has also been active in the Inter-City Shows. He has generously contributed many informational articles to this and other clubs on a variety of succulent plant families. Tom is an engineer at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and plans to retire this April. Tom is the author of "Beginner's Guide to Gasteria, Haworthia, Agave and other Succulent Monocots" published by CSSA. About five years ago Tom became interested in ceramics and started producing pots which he sells at many local plant sales. Aside from cacti and succulents, his botanical interests also include bulbs. He may bring plants to sell.

The Drakensbergs form the eastern portion of the Great Escarpment of South Africa. The mountains are rich in plant life and are home to species of *Erica* and conifers, as well as *Aloe polyphylla*.

\*\* If your last name begins with **G--L** please bring in goodies for the refreshment table.

**PLEASE ALSO BRING cuttings to the meeting for Bonnie. She will pot up the cuttings for our Show and Sale. It takes a few months for the plants to grow enough to be ready to sell.**

**January 2016 Plant of the Month Winners**

**Junior Cactus (miniature, under 3")**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Gretchen Davis	Mammillaria schiedeana
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Gretchen Davis	Rebutia albipilosa
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Gretchen Davis	Mammillaria plumosa

**Senior Cactus**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Turbinicarpus schmiedickeanus</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Gymnocalycium variegata</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Frailea</i> sp.
	Stan Kamin	<i>Mammillaria gracilis</i>

**Junior Succulent**

No entries

**Senior Succulent (miniature, under 3")**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Othonna euphorbioides</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Nels Christianson	<i>Othonna triplinervia</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Brian Gold	<i>Othonna euphorbioides</i>

The January POM judges were Christine Kaunitz and Ron Babcock accompanied by Nels Christianson.

**2016 Plant of the Month**

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>CACTUS</u>	<u>SUCCULENT</u>
February	Crested, Monstrose	<i>Pelargonium, Sarcocaulon</i>
March	<i>Mammillaria</i> (straight spine)	<i>Echeveria, Dudleya</i>
April	<i>Echinopsis, Lobivia</i>	<i>Aeonium, Sempervivum</i>
May	Cactus -- Epiphytic	<i>Sansevieria</i>
June	<i>Astrophytum, Ariocarpus</i>	<i>Euphorbia</i> -- Madagascar
September	<i>Melocactus, Buiningia</i>	<i>Stapeliads, Fockia, Raphionacme</i>
October	<i>Gymnocalycium</i>	<i>Adenium, Pachypodium</i>
November	<i>Copiapoa, Matucana</i>	<i>Haworthia</i>

**Plant of the Month, Cactus: Crests and Monstrose**

The three most common types of mutation are crests, monstrose growth and variegation. All of these are mutations of the cellular structure of the leaf or stem growth tip (apical meristem) of the plant. In normal plants the growth tip is a point, and the biochemistry of the plant forces one tip to be dominant or at least locally dominant. In crests the genetic mutation removes this dominance, and instead of a single growth tip the area of active cell growth degenerates into a line. For monstrose growth, the local dominance is lost, and every growth tip tries to grow as if it were the dominant point.

Cresting and monstrose growth is not unique to succulent plants. Crests are found in many genera of non-succulent plants, including conifers and many common garden plants.

### **Culture of crests and monstrose plants**

Crests 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 non-crested plants of the same species will quickly show whether grafting is necessary. Mutant 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. This is one of the many reasons they are often grown as grafts.

### **Propagation of crests and monstrose plants**

Crests flower and produce seed, just as other plants do, but less often. Good strong growth is probably the best way to produce a flowering plant. Mutations are not generally transmitted by seed; however, seed from a mutant plant 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 mother plant, but monstrose and variegated plants are also possible.

The most common method of propagation of these plants is vegetative. Cuttings of are often grafted to speed growth and to preserve special growth forms.

Tom Glavich October 2002

### **Plant of the Month, *Pelargonium*, *Sarcocaulon***

*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**

Tom Glavich

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Feb. 13**, San Diego C&S Society, Spring Show and Sale, Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego, 858-382-1797.

**March 18&19**, Orange County C&S Society Spring Show and Sale, Friday & Saturday, Fri 18th 9AM-7PM, Sat 19th, 9AM-5PM, 1000 S. State College Blvd. (Anaheim United Methodist Church), Anaheim, 562-587-3357.

**Apr. 9 & 10**, South Coast C&S Society Show and Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA, info: 310-378-1953, [www.southcoast.org](http://www.southcoast.org)

**Apr. 24**, Huntington Botanical Gardens Plant Sale, 10-5, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino, info: 626-405-3504.

**May 1**, South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale, 9am-4pm, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 310-833-6823.

**April 30 & May 1, Sunset Succulent Society Show and Sale, Veterans' Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City, 310-822-1783. Saturday sale opens 9:00am, show around noon.**

**May 13 & 14**, Gates C&S Society, Show and Sale, Fri & Sat 9am-4:30pm, at Land Scapes Southern California Style, 450 E. Alessandro Blvd., Riverside CA, info: 951-360-8802.

**May 21 & 22**, Long Beach Cactus Club Show and Sale, 10:00am-4:00pm, Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Rd, Long Beach, info: 562-631-5876, [www.lbcss.org](http://www.lbcss.org)

**May 28 & 29**, Central Coast C&S Society annual Show and Sale, 10:00am-4:00pm, Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo CA, info: 805-237-2054, [www.centralcoastcactus.org](http://www.centralcoastcactus.org)

**June 11 & 12**, Los Angeles C&S Society, Show and Sale, June 11<sup>th</sup> 9:00am-5:00pm, 12<sup>th</sup> 9:00am-3:30pm, Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino CA, info: [www.lacss-show.com](http://www.lacss-show.com)

**June 4 & 5**, San Diego C&S Society, summer Show and Sale, Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego, info: 858-382-1797.

**July 1--3**, CSSA Annual Show & Sale, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino, CA, info: 626-405-3504, Plant sales starts July 1<sup>st</sup> through July 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Show opens on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and ends July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**July 22 & 23**, Orange County C&S Society summer Show and Sale, Thurs July 21 6-8 PM, Fri. July 22 9AM-7PM and Sat. July 23 9:00am-5:00pm, 1000 S. State College Bl. (Anaheim United Methodist Church), Anaheim CA, info: 949-212-8417.

**Aug. 13 & 14**, 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Intercity Show and Sale at the LA County Arboretum, 9:00am-5:00pm daily, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia CA, info: Tom Glavich 626-798-2430 or Artie Chavez 818-482-8795.

**Sept. 3**, Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium, all day at the Huntington.

**Sept. 10**, Long Beach Cactus Club annual Plant Auction, 12:00-5:00pm, Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Rd., Long Beach, CA 90615, info: 562-631-5876.

**Oct. 22 & 23**, Palomar Show and Sale, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4, San Diego Botanic Gardens, 230 Quail Gardens Rd., Encinitas, Info: [hciservices@gmail.com](mailto:hciservices@gmail.com) 858-382-1797.

**Nov. 5 & 6**, San Gabriel Cactus and Succulent Society, 9AM-4PM Both Days Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 310 N. Baldwin, Arcadia, CA. Manny Rivera 626-780-6957 or John Matthews 661-714-1052.



Front garden of Mary and Bryan Chan, Granada Hills, CA.  
Photo by Gretchen Davis.

**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>Laurel Woodley, Plant of the Month</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Peggy Oberg</b>	<b>(310) 645-7946</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Gretchen Davis</b>

**Membership: Coni Nettles**

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.



*Aeoniums* look nice at this time of year.