



DRY TIMES

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President: Rosalie Gorchoff
(310) 822-1783

Editor: Nels Christianson
(310) 396-1231
nelsico@gmail.com

October meeting
Tuesday, October 4, 2016
7:30 pm

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

PROGRAM

Cacti of Peru: Land of the Incas
Guillermo Rivera

PLANT OF THE MONTH

CACTUS:
Gymnocalycium

SUCCULENT:
Adenium, Pachypodium

Born in Argentina, Guillermo is the owner of South America Nature Tours (formerly Cactus Expeditions), a company dedicated to the organization of tours for the last 15 years, throughout South America (Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador), Mexico and South Africa, Madagascar, and Namibia with emphasis on plants (bromeliads, cacti, and orchids), and birding. He led the recent successful CSSA tour to Peru. He is a former researcher at the University of Cordoba, Argentina. Guillermo holds a BS degree in Biology from the University of Cordoba, an MS in Marine Biology from Northeastern University and a PhD in Botany from the University of Cordoba.

Guillermo informs that next year he is planning trips to Namibia, Mozambique, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Southern Patagonia. All these trips will focus on the succulent and/or bromeliad flora of these places (except Southern Patagonia). He writes: If you wish to be kept informed about our future trips, please join Facebook Groups:

“CACTUS AND SUCCULENT FIELD TOURS”
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1066757093389430/>
BROMELIAD FIELD TOURS
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/190792077971404/>

or contact me directly at riversa@intecar.com.ar or info@cactusexpeditions.com

Last month Jeff Moore, proprietor of Solana Succulents, gave a colorful presentation entitled “Under the Spell of Succulents” which discussed the uses of succulents in the landscape.

** If your last name begins with **S--Z** please bring in goodies for the refreshment table.

2016 Plant of the Month

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>CACTUS</u>	<u>SUCCULENT</u>
October	<i>Gymnocalycium</i>	<i>Adenium, Pachypodium</i>
November	<i>Copiapoa, Matucana</i>	<i>Haworthia</i>

Plant of the Month, Cactus: *Gymnocalycium*

Gymnocalycium is a genus of about 70 South American globular cacti whose main area of distribution is Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, southern Brazil and southern Bolivia. They grow in rocky outcrops and in grasslands of nutrient poor soils. Most of the species prefer temperatures above 50° F. in winter. The genus is of easy cultivation, preferring a warm, dry location. Flower color varies from a ghostly white to cream, yellow, apricot, pink, magenta and red.



Gymnocalycium saglionis



G. baldianum



G. stellatum, photos by N. Christianson

In addition to the species pictured above, some commonly cultivated species are *G. bruchii*, *G. buenekeri*, *G. denudatum*, *G. eurypleurum*, *G. glaucum*, *G. horstii*, *G. leeanum*, *G. marsoneri*, *G. mihanovichii*, *G. mostii*, *G. obductum*, *G. pflanzii*, *G. quehlianum*, *G. ragonesi*, *G. spegazzinii*, *G. stenopleurum*, *G. strigianum* and *G. uruguayense*.

Plant of the Month, Succulent: *Adenium, Pachypodium*



Adenium are members of the *Apocynaceae*, and are relatives of *Pachypodium*, *Plumeria*, *Amosonia*, *Carrisa*, *Oleander*, *Thevetia* and *Vinca*. *Adenium* are native to Africa. *Adenium* are easy to grow, requiring only good fertilizer, lots of water when in growth and protection from cold and damp when dormant. Several growers place their plants in

their garages in late fall to force dormancy, and to protect them from cold and damp conditions. *Adenium* hybridization for the caudex shape and flower color is being undertaken in many locations.

Pachypodiums, members of the *Apocynaceae*, are most closely related to *Adenium*, and more distantly to *Oleander* and *Plumeria*. *Pachypodiums* are native to only Southern Africa and Madagascar. There are more Madagascan species than there are African, due to the geography of the island of Madagascar, with isolated regions that encourage the development of endemic populations of plants, animals and insects. New species are still being discovered as botanists explore the more remote and isolated areas of Madagascar.

The Madagascan species are easy to grow, with the sole difficulty being their sensitivity to cold and wet. If they are protected, either by being brought indoors during the winter, or protected from rain and cold in a cold frame, or even a garage, they will survive and grow quickly. African species are generally easier, and are more tolerant of cold and wet.

Propagation of either the Madagascan or African species is easy from seed. Seeds are simply placed on good wet potting soil, and germination generally occurs within a week. Seeds should be sown in the spring to mid-summer, however the seeds are generally not long lived, (about a year is as long as they should be kept) and good results can be obtained nearly any time of year except mid-winter. Protection from direct sun is necessary until the first few leaf pairs have formed, and then gradual movement into strong light, with an increase in feeding and water will bring quick and strong growth. All of the *Pachypodiums* are worth growing, and since there are not really that many species, and seeds and seedling plants are relatively cheap, a complete collection is within the resources of many.

Prominent *Pachypodiums*:

Pachypodium brevicaule, shown above, is a ground hugging, nearly flat caudiciform, the shortest of all the species. It comes from east side of Madagascar, near the middle of the island. It's knobby top growth hides roots that anchor it to the soil.

Pachypodium baronii v windsorii comes from a peak named Windsor Castle in the northernmost part of the island. It is a small species, with a bulbous base. Its larger cousin, *P. baronii v. baronii* grows 200 miles further down the coast, and is larger, growing to 6 feet in the wild. Both of these are sensitive to both over and under watering.

Pachypodium geayi is a southern species, similar in appearance to *Pachypodium lamerei*, but more robust. It is the largest member of the genus, growing in a few instances to 30 feet. Like *P. lamerei*, it is a fast grower, but is less tolerant to cold. The main visible difference is the fine coating of hair or down on the spines, and when in flower, the completely different flower.

Pachypodium horombense, known also as *P. rosulatum v. horombense*, is a Southern species, with a wide base. It is the queen of the Madagascar *Pachypodiums*, with many people agreeing that this is the most beautiful. It takes a place of honor as one of the oldest plants in the Huntington Conservatory. It is relatively easy to grow. It has open yellow flowers that are easily pollinated by bees, and forms a robust pachycaul trunk even as a young seedling.

Pachypodium lealii is from two small regions on the east and west coasts of South Africa. This species has very large thick trunks. Harder to come by than most, it is a beautiful species.

Pachypodium lamerei is the best known of all the *Pachypodiums*, available as a "Madagascar Palm" in florists, home centers and even supermarkets. It grows quickly, reaching 12 inches within a year if well (lots of food and water). It tolerates indoor life well, and is popular as a house plant. Several cultivars have been created, with more robust trunks, or lower and more frequent branches. It grows in the South and West.

Pachypodium namaquanum is a favorite of many. In many ways, this plant defines Namaqualand in the same way that the Saguaro defines the Sonora desert. It is also known as the half man, from its silhouette appearance against the sky. Easy to grow, it often loses all its leaves in early summer, then leafs out again about a month later.

Pachypodium rutenbergianum is the opposite of *P. brevicaule*, reaching for the sky, even as a young seedling. It grows from the northernmost tip to the southeast of the island, but in spite of this wide distribution is fairly difficult to grow. It likes warmth, but the roots will shrivel and die if kept too dry in the winter. The tips will freeze and rot, even in the mild winters of the San Gabriel valley.

Pachypodium succulentum is another African species, easy to grow, and willing to stay small when grown in a pot. It is a perfect specimen for bonsai treatment.

Reference: G. Rowley, *Pachypodium and Adenium*
Tom Glavich July 2001



Pachypodium namaquanum



Adenium obesum, photo by N. Christianson

UPCOMING EVENTS

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 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.

If you have stamps or stamped envelopes you don't want, please save them for the Editor.

About DRY TIMES

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

President	Rosalie Gorchoff	(310) 822-1783	Vice Pres.	Laurel Woodley, Plant of the Month
Secretary	Peggy Oberg	(310) 645-7946	Treasurer	Gretchen Davis

Membership: Coni Nettles

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