



DRY TIMES

VOL. 117

APRIL 2017

No. 4

President: Rosalie Gorchoff
(310) 822-1783

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

April meeting
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
7:30 pm

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

PROGRAM

Workshop: Getting Ready for the Spring Show

Karen Ostler

PLANT OF THE MONTH

CACTUS:

Astrophytum, Ariocarpus

SUCCULENT:

Kalanchoe, Graptopetalum

Longtime Sunset member and expert grower Karen Ostler will return to give a hands-on presentation of getting plants ready for our show. Karen will bring some plants to pot up and will at the same time discuss grooming, choice of pot, plant placement, soil mixtures, and top dressings. Members are encouraged to bring in a plant and pot if you would like to have Karen transplant and stage it for you.

Karen and her husband Martin live in Juniper Hills, near Pearblossom. This is an area about 3,000 feet in altitude with seasonal extremes requiring special care to grow certain succulent plants. Their lovely custom home with an interior courtyard is located in a rural setting with a stunning desert view. Karen grows some of her plants in the courtyard but most of them in a greenhouse.

Last month Woody Minnich gave an excellent and detailed presentation on growing cacti and succulents to perfection.

** If your last name begins with **A – E** please bring in goodies for the refreshment table.

2017 Plant of the Month

MONTH

April
May
June
September
October
November

CACTUS

Astrophytum, Ariocarpus
Parodia, Notocactus
Gymnocalycium
Ferocactus, Echinocactus
Opuntioids, Pereskia
Epiphytic cacti

SUCCULENT

Kalanchoe, Graptopetalum
Euphorbia – African continent
Succulent crests
Adenium, Pachypodium
Agave, Calibanus, Nolina, Yucca
Deuterocohnia, Dyckia, Puya

March 2017 Plant of the Month Winners

Junior Cactus

1 st Place	Christine Kaunitz	<i>Mammillaria bombycina</i>
2 nd Place	Gretchen Davis	<i>Mammillaria saffordii</i>
3 rd Place	William Wilk	<i>Mammillaria bocasana roseiflora</i>

Senior Cactus

1 st Place	Karen Ostler	<i>Mammillaria guelzowiana</i>
2 nd Place	Karen Ostler	<i>Mammillaria wrightii</i>
	Brian Gold	<i>Mammillaria magnificus</i>
3 rd Place	Karen Ostler	<i>Mammillaria insularis</i>
	Brian Gold	<i>Mammillaria perezdelarosa</i>

Junior Succulent

1 st Place	Christine Kaunitz	<i>Aloe</i> hybrid
2 nd Place	William Wilk	<i>Aloe</i> 'Sunset'
3 rd Place	William Wilk	<i>Aloe</i> 'Brown Betty'

Senior Succulent

1 st Place	Laurel Woodley	<i>Aloe</i> 'Jeff Karsner'
2 nd Place	Jim Hanna	<i>Aloe</i> 'Tim's Beauty'
	Jim Hanna	<i>Aloe sinkatana</i> x <i>A. rauhii</i>
3 rd Place	Jim Hanna	<i>Aloe sinkatana</i> x <i>A. jacunda</i>
	Brian Gold	<i>Aloe</i> 'Marsha Layhew'

The March POM judges were Gretchen Davis and Peggy Oberg accompanied by Woody Minnich.

Plant of the Month, Cactus: *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*:

Ariocarpus is one of the treasures of the world of Cacti. This genus, from Central to Northern Mexico and Southern Texas has some of the most spectacular species of the entire family. Some succulent growers, who otherwise avoid cacti, make this genus their sole exception. There are collectors who collect nothing but *Ariocarpus*, and have hundreds of plants in their collections. Rare specimens can change hands for hundreds of dollars. Rare cultivars with unusual tubercles can be sold for even more, particularly in Japan. There is no denying that this single genus has generated a worldwide cult of devotees.



Ariocarpus retusus entered in the 2001 Intercity Show
by Vince Basta, photo T. Nomer



Ariocarpus fissuratus, photo by N. Christianson

With all of this, you might expect *Ariocarpus* to be difficult to come by, and difficult to grow. Nothing could be further from the truth. They are no more difficult to grow than many other central Mexican genera. All of the species and all of the varieties are readily available, and nearly all are affordable. This genera is well within the range of even beginning novice growers. Field collected specimens are occasionally available, and these are much more expensive, and much harder to grow. Recently collected specimens are now almost always illegally obtained.

With all of the fuss we make over this genus, it is important to remember that the plants have had important ethnobotanical uses. The tubercles have a sticky mucilage, and this was often used as glue to mend broken pots. *A. kotchybeanus* was boiled and used as a cure for rheumatism, and several species were used as a ‘false peyote’ in religious ceremonies.

Cultivation is not difficult, when the home environment of these plants is remembered. They grow in mineral soils, with very little organic matter. They all have large tuberous roots. They grow in areas that are very hot in the summer, and that have summer rainfall. If they are protected from excess organic matter, particularly peat, and watered heavily only in hot weather, good growth will result. They need protection from winter rains. There are six species, several varieties, and a near infinite set of cultivars.

References:

Anderson, E. **The Cactus Family**; Cullman, Gotz and Groner, **The Encyclopedia of Cacti**; Preston-Mafham, **Cacti, The Illustrated Dictionary**; Innes, C. and Glass, C., **Cacti**
Tom Glavich

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 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



Astrophytum asterias var. Kabuko, photo by N. Christianson



Astrophytum capricorne exhibited by Laura Oster 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

Photos T. Nomer, except as noted

Plant of the Month, Succulent: *Kalanchoe* and *Graptopetalum*

Kalanchoe is an Old-World tropical genus of approximately 125 succulent species, about half of which are from Madagascar. The largest is *K. beharensis* which reaches over 9 feet in height in you Editor’s garden. Popular and attractive species include *K. gastonis-bonnierii*, *K. marmorata*, *K. rhombopilosa*, *K. thrysiflora* and *K. tomentosa*. The discerning collector should avoid some species such as *K. delagoensis* since they can escape into the garden and become weeds. (*K. delagoensis* is a weed at the habitat of *Orthophytum conquistense* south of Vitória da Conquista, Bahia, Brazil, among other locations worldwide.) Many of the species have beautiful pendulous flowers in shades of yellow, orange, red and pink as in *K. blossfeldiana* which has been widely hybridized and distributed.



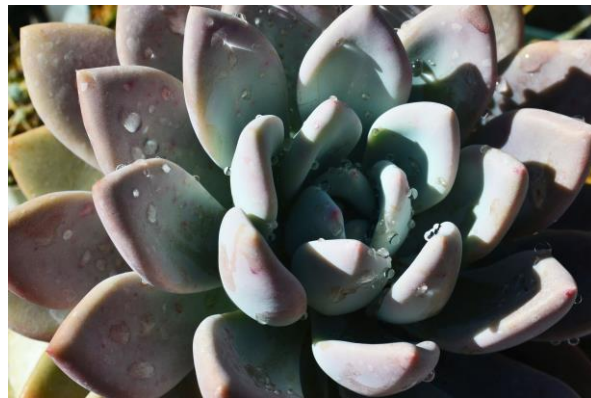
Kalanchoe beharensis cv. 'Fang'



Kalanchoe flower



Kalanchoe tomentosa



xGraptopveria 'Opalina', photos by N. Christianson

There are approximately twenty species of *Graptopetalum*, whose succulent petals are arranged in an elegant rosette. Habitats range from Arizona to central Mexico. Brownish white to pink star-shaped flowers grow on rangy inflorescences. Misnamed *G. paraguayense* (native to Tamaulipas, Mexico) is the most common species. *G. pentandrum* and *G. amethystinum* are particularly lovely lavender toned species. *G. pachyphyllum* is a choice miniature. Several hybrids of the genus and intergeneric crosses are known such as the radiant *xGraptopveria* 'Opalina'. All species are drought tolerant and grow well in the Los Angeles basin.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- APR. 8-9 SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW & SALE SOUTH COAST BOTANICAL GARDENS, 26300 CRENSHAW BLVD., PALOS VERDES, CA INFO: 310-378-1953 <http://www.southcoastcss.org>
- APR. 29 HUNTINGTON PLANT SALE 1 TO 5 PM HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS, 1151 OXFORD ROAD, SAN MARINO, CA. 626-405-3504
- MAY 6-7 SUNSET SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE VETERANS MEMORIAL CENTER, GARDEN ROOM, 4117 OVERLAND AVE., CULVER CITY, CA. INFO. 310-822-1783
- MAY 7 SOUTH BAY EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE---9am to 4pm SOUTH COAST BONTANICAL GARDENS, INFO. 310-833-6823
- MAY 12-13 GATES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY 35TH SHOW AND SALE FRI & SAT 9-4:30 pm, at LAND SCAPES SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA STYLE 450 E. ALESSANDRO BLVD., RIVERSIDE, CA INFO. 951-360-8802
- MAY 20-21 LONG BEACH CACTUS CLUB PLANT SHOW AND SALE 10-4 pm RANCHO LOS ALAMITOS, 6400 BIXBY HILL ROAD, LONG BEACH, CA INFO. 562-631-5876
- MAY 27-28 CENTRAL COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW & SALE (10-4PM), LUDWICK CENTER, 864 SANTA ROSA SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA – INFO. 805-237-2054, www.centralcoastcactus.org
- JUNE 3-4 SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY-- SUMMERSHOW & SALE BALBOA PARK, ROOM 101, SAN DIEGO, CA INFO. 858-382-1797

- JUNE 10-11 LOS ANGELES CACTUS and SUCCULENT SOCIETY PLANT SHOW AND SALE
 JUNE 10 9-4—11th 9-3
 SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER, 16633 MAGNOLIA BLVD., ENCINO, CA.
 INFO. www.lacss-show.com
- JUN 30-JUL 2 CSSA ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE –HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS
 1151 OXFORD ROAD, SAN MARINO, CA.
 626-405-3504 PLANTS SALES START JUNE 30TH THRU JULY 2ND
 SHOW OPENS JULY 1ST THUR JULY 2ND
- JULY 20-22 ORANGE COUNTY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SUMMER SHOW AND SALE. THURS. 20TH 6-8pm, FRI. JULY 21ST 9am-7pm, SAT. 22ND 9-5pm
 1000 S. State College Bl., (Anaheim United Methodist Church) Anaheim, CA INFORMATION CALL 949-212-8417

JULY 26-31 CSSA CONVENTION, TEMPE, AZ.

- AUG. 12-13 32ND ANNUAL INTERCITY SHOW AND SALE AT THE LA COUNTY ARBORETUM, 9am-5pm daily, 301 NO. BALDWIN AVE., ARCADIA, CA.
 INFO. CALL TOM GLAVICH 626-798-2430 or ARTIE CHAVEZ 818-482-8795
- SEPT. 2 HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM
 ALL DAY AT THE HUNTINGTON 626-405-3504
- SEPT. 24 LONG BEACH CACTUS CLUB ANNUAL PLANT AUCTION -12-5PM
 RANCHO LOS ALAMITOS, 6400 BIXBY HILL ROAD, LONG BEACH, CA 90615 INFO. 562-631-5876
- Oct. 7-8 BAKERSFIELD CACTUS and SUCCULENT SOCIETY
 SHOW & SALE SAT. 10-5---SUN. 11-3 ST. PAUL’S CHURCH, 2216 17th STREET
 BAKERSFIELD, CA 93304 FREE ADDMISSION & PARKING, INFO 661-8318488
- OCT. 28-29 PALOMAR SHOW AND SALE SAT 9-5, SUN 10-4, SAN DIEGO BOTANIC GARDENS
 230 QUAIL GARDENS ROAD, ENCINITAS, CA
 INFO hciservices@gmail.com. 858-382-1797
- NOV. 4-5 SAN GABRIEL CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY 9am-4pm BOTH DAYS
 SHOW AND SALE---LA COUNTY ARBORETUM 310 NO. BALDWIN, ARCADIA, CA MANNY RIVERA
 626-780-6957 or JOHN MATTHEWS 661-714-1052

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

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.