

CACTUS COURIER

Newsletter of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society
The North San Diego County Cactus and Succulent Club

Volume 68, Number 8

August 2022

Get to Know Kevin Smith

VOLUNTEER AT PALOMAR CACTUS & SUCCULENT GARDEN

I've been a member since 2016 and have been a volunteer at the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Garden since early 2018. The garden at Palomar College is amazing with thousands of cactus and succulent plants and over 20 trees of various kinds. The garden is truly a great accomplishment by the Palomar Cactus and Succulent members over the years who put a lot of time and effort into making what the garden is today. Not to mention all the plants donated (many purchased) by the membership.



Photo by Kevin Smith

August 2022 Potluck Picnic

Saturday, August 27, 2022

11:30 am - 2:30 pm

at the

Palomar College Cactus & Succulent Garden
Palomar College, Comet Cir, San Marcos 92056

No Brag, Exchange, Sales Tables or Library

Free Member Gift Plant Drawing

See Pages 2 & 3 for More Information

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See Back Page for Club Information

When I began volunteering the garden had been a little unkempt as there had not been a volunteer there for several years. Over time I've gotten control of the weeds and to some degree the pests that just never seem to go away. Also, with more regular watering the plants look better and have grown a lot. I'm currently adding more rocks to line the pathways to improve the appearance. I hope many of you will be able to take time out of your day, August 27th, to see what the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society created over the 60 years the garden has existed.

POTLUCK PICNIC AT THE Palomar College Cactus & Succulent Garden August 27th, 11:30am - 2:30pm

After a long two+ years we once again get to visit and picnic in the Cactus & Succulent Garden at Palomar College. In 1962 our club's members designed, funded, and planted this garden, and members have done most of the caretaking since then. In 2011 PCSS donated the plants to the college.

Currently Kevin Smith, a PCSS member, spends many hours each week maintaining the garden - adding to the plant collection and doing the never-ending watering and weeding. If you haven't seen the Garden (or seen it lately) you are in for a real treat! Some of the special plants you can see when visiting are Aloe ferox, Aloe cameronii, Euphorbia ingens and Cholla sp.

Gift plants - Member gift plant drawing for members. Please see newsletter page 3.

Location - The Garden is on Palomar College grounds on the corner of Comet Cir. and W. Mission Rd. Park in Lot 3, right next to the garden gate. The ground is a little uneven and there is one slight hill.

Seating - There will only be a few chairs available so please bring your own for a guaranteed seat.

Amenities: There are no restrooms on site.

Food - Please bring one of your favorite dishes if you haven't already signed up below.

The following links provide more information about the garden:

<https://www2.palomar.edu/users/warmstrong/arbimg9.htm>

<https://www.palomarcactus.org/palomar-college-garden/>

<https://www.palomar.edu/arboretum/wp-content/uploads/sites/84/2014/10/cactusSucculentSociety2012.pdf>



Ron Chisum, May Fong Ho & Kevin Smith



Photo by Kevin Smith

POTLUCK PICNIC FOOD SIGN-UP

Name

Pauline Wong
Barbara Watzke

Name

Julian Duval
Georgina Chamberlain
Lois Walag
Alex Clark
Richard Miller

Name

Charlyne Barad
Kevin Smith

Name

Tammy Granados

Name

Ted Guerrero

Your Dish Here:

Appetizers

Dim Sum
Cheese, grapes, nuts

Salads / Side Dishes

Baked beans
Salad
Small salad
Orzo salad
Cottage cheese, cool whip
and fruit salad

Main Dishes

Shrimp / Quinoa salad
Chicken wings

Dessert

TBD

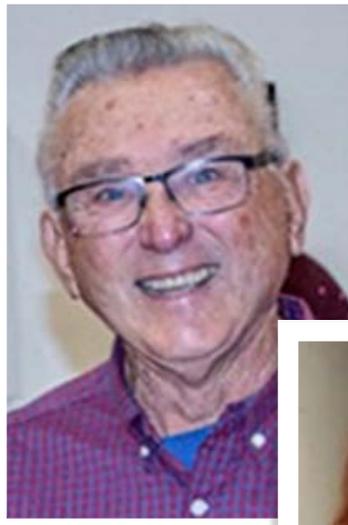
Beverage

Bottled Water

We Are Not Moving Thanks to Wanda and Gary!

Wanda Mallen and Gary Vincent knew the Board was frantically searching for another meeting venue as the Community Center's additional fees more than doubled the costs for our monthly meetings as of July 2022. They decided to donate to our PCSS 501(c)(3) organization making up the difference in the rental increase at the Center for the next year. YAY, we are NOT moving! After 40 years, this is STILL home.

In July, the Board members voted to make Wanda and Gary Lifetime members. We are grateful. Join us in thanking Wanda and Gary.



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Pachycormis discolor

MEMBER GIFT PLANT DRAWING

At the annual PCSS picnic on August 27th there will be a Member Gift Plant Drawing Table. Each PCSS member who attends will receive a free ticket, and there will be enough plants so that everyone will be a winner.

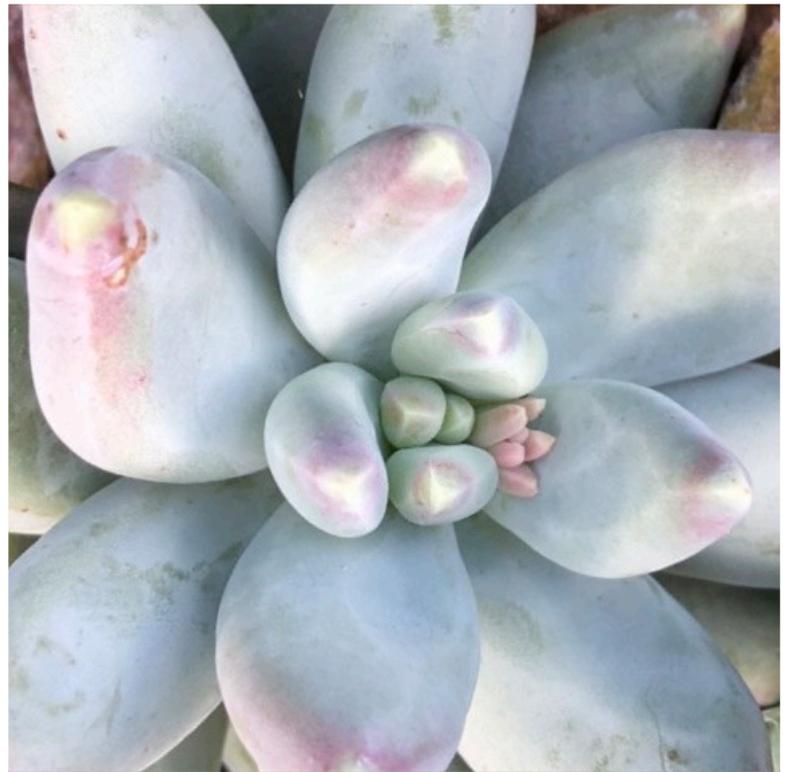
The plants will come from Dean Karras' nursery Gnosis. The donor of the plants wishes to remain anonymous, and feels that the faithful membership of the PCSS deserve an extra summer bonus for their help and participation, all of which makes our club such a fine organization.

So join your fellow club members for a fun picnic and cash in on a free plant (just what you need for your plant collection...)

AUGUST 2022
President's Corner
BY ROBERT KOPFSTEIN

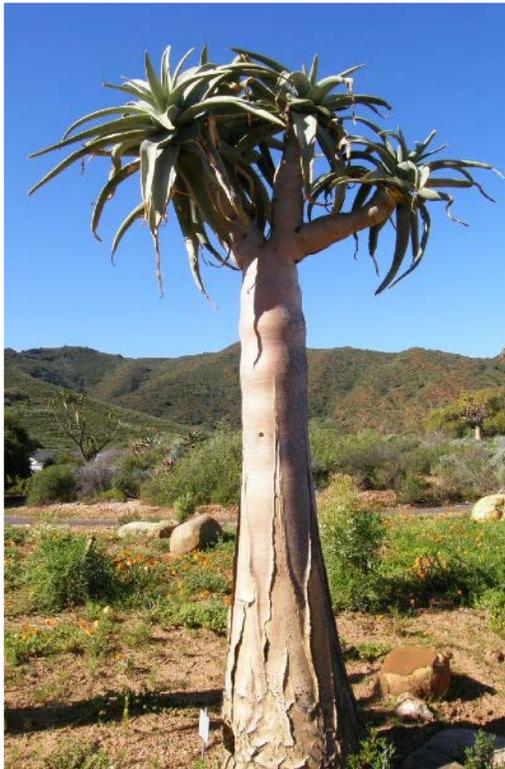
As humans we are somehow attracted to the offbeat, the unusual, the rare. In the nineteenth century P. T. Barnum made a career of satisfying people's taste for the unusual or the novel.

In the plant world people seem to be attracted to the bizarre. Notice that whenever a corpse flower blooms the newspapers pick up the story and the public flocks to experience the sight (truly unusual) and the odor (truly putrescent) of this exotic tuber from Indonesia whose botanical name *Amorphophallus titanum* is R rated—the botanist who chose this moniker obviously had either a good sense of humor or an overactive imagination.



Pachyphytum compactum
Photo by Monica Mosack

For those of us who fancy succulents and cactus there is no lack of candidates for the category of rare and/or unusual. But what is it that makes a plant "rare?" Years ago a woman I knew collected sanseverias; her definition of a rare plant was simple: it is one that I do not own. While this definition might suffice for some, there are more serious criteria that explain why certain plants are rare.



Aloe pillansii
Photo by africa-seeds.com

One factor is that some plants are hard to grow and propagate. There are some succulents and cactus that have very demanding cultural requirements either in the soil, moisture, or temperature necessary for them to thrive. Light also is often an important element; too much or too little can prove fatal.

Some of the cactus and succulents rarely produce seed or offsets. There is a Mexican agave (*A. nayaritensis*) that grows in the mountains near the city of Tepic. It occupies a very limited range, produces no offsets, and it produces flowers after many years of vegetative growth. Like other agaves it dies after flowering. As a result you are unlikely to find this otherwise attractive plant in your local nursery.

Loss of habitat is another problem for plants that occupy a limited niche in the world of nature. We humans have taken over huge swaths of the earth and with cities, roads, dams, and agriculture we have bulldozed, paved over, drowned, overgrazed, and plowed under much of what used to be the natural world.

JULY 2022

Brag Plant Winners

Intermediate Cactus

- 1st Kevin Smith Parodia rubelliamata - 2
- 2nd Kevin Smith Gymnocalycium mihanovichii - 1
- 3rd Ted Guerrero Echinomastus intertextus - 3

Advanced Cactus

- 1st John Barkley Gymnocalycium pflanzii - 9
- 1st Russel Ray Mammillaria elongate - 11
- 2nd Robert Kopfstein Tephrocactus weberi - 8
- 2nd Moni Waiblinger Mammillaria elongata crest - 13
- 3rd Russel Ray Mammillaria albilanata - 10
- 3rd Russel Ray Mammillaria prolifera - 12

Intermediate Succulent

- 1st Kevin Smith Euphorbia polygona 'Snowflake' - 4
- 2nd Pauline Wong Aeonium 'Kiwi' - 7
- 2nd Pauline Wong Crassula caput minima - 6
- 3rd Lois Walag Portulacaria afra variegata - 5

Advanced Succulent

- 1st Mike Nelson Bursera fagaroides - 16
- 2nd Russel Ray Tillandsia xerographica - 15
- 3rd Mike Nelson Operculicarya decaryi - 14

Plant of the Month - Intermediate

- 1st Jim Anderson Curio rowleyanus - 17
- 2nd Jim Anderson Curio herrrianus - 18
- 3rd Jim Anderson Senecio kleiniiformis - 19

Plant of the Month - Advanced

- 1st Moni Waiblinger Senecio peregrinus - 20
- 2nd Wanda Mallen Senecio macroglossus - 21

Notes:

About 20 species of Senecio were reclassified as Curio in 1999.



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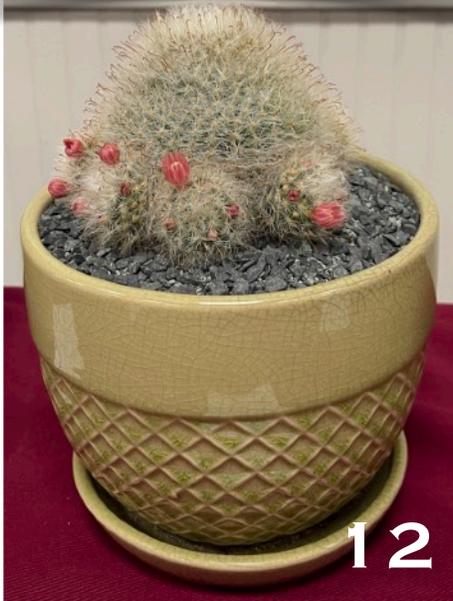
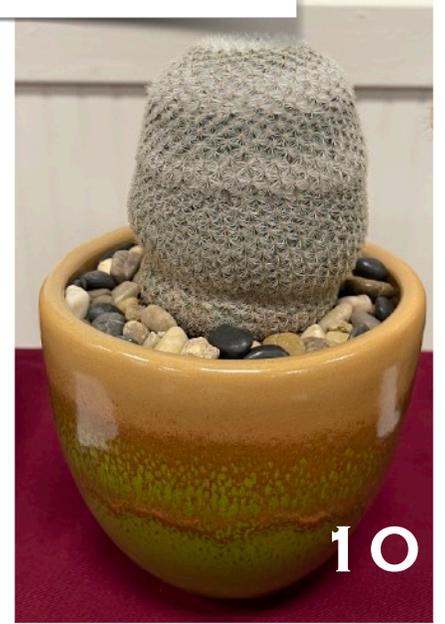
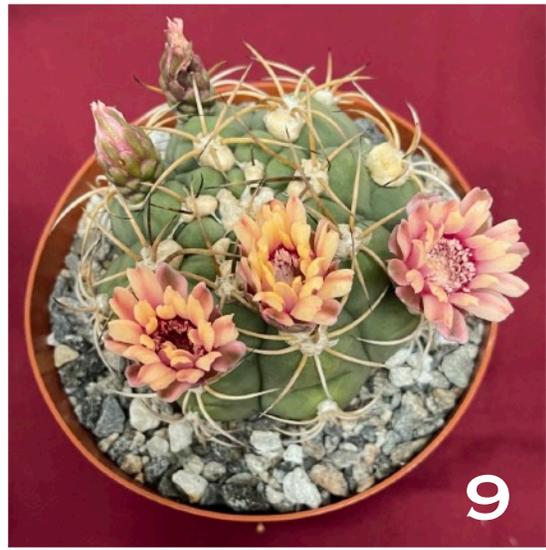


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JULY 2022
Brag Plant Winners
(CONT. FROM PAGE 5)



JULY 2022

Brag Plant Winners

(CONT. FROM PAGE 6)



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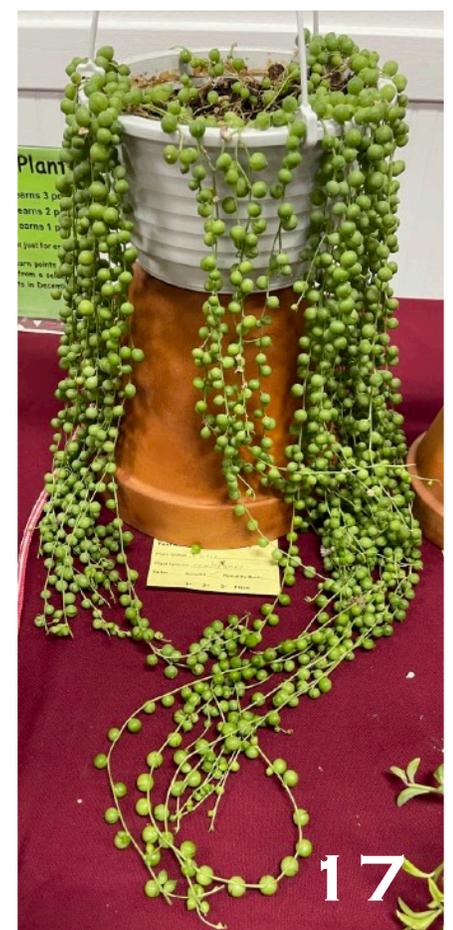
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Lastly, poaching is also a reason why some plants have become rare or extinct in the wild. If a plant is attractive and few collectors have it, the price to buy it soars, and it becomes more and more tempting for poachers to take specimens from the wild in order to make money. It is safe to say that these ravagers of the natural world care little about the survival of species if they can turn a fast buck by selling their illegally gotten swag to buyers who often care little whether the plants they are buying were responsibly cultivated.

The following is a sample of some of the succulent and cactus species that are considered to be rare:



Agave nayaritensis
Photo by rarepalmseeds.com

Whitesloanea crassa - This caudiciform stapeliad comes from northern Somalia. It originally was described in 1914. Thirty years later (1942-1957) there were multiple searches of the habitat; no plants were found. However in 1957 a second habitat was discovered. Since that time this colony has also been wiped out. *Whitesloanea crassa* has several things going against it: it has no defenses against grazing animals (think goats: the plants have no spines, no toxic sap like euphorbias to deter the hungry goats). The habitat is degraded by the goats over-grazing along with climate change-induced drought which causes desertification. As far as is known, the sole survivors of this plant are those in cultivation. In addition *Whitesloanea* is not easy to grow. It is both temperature and water sensitive.

Discocactus subterraneo-proliferans - Also called *Discocactus heptacanthum*. Botanists think there may be 50 left in the wild in Brazil where it was originally discovered. Most of the habitat was destroyed by farming and ranching.

Pachyphytum compactum - This member of the family crassulaceae is found in the states of Hidalgo and Queretaro in central Mexico. It is a winter grower pollinated by hummingbirds. Botanists believe only 2,000-4,000 plants still exist in the wild on cliffs (which could protect them because of inaccessibility).

Cyphostemma uter - A caudiciform which is in the family vitaceae, the grape family. Hence the common name is desert grape, but the fruit which resembles grapes is highly toxic. The plant was named in 1960 and its native habitat is in Angola and northwest Namibia. It can reach a height of six to nine feet and the caudex can be three feet in diameter.

Aloe pilansii - The common name is giant quiver tree or the bastard quiver tree. This tree aloe is listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). It can reach a height of 48 feet with a base six feet in diameter. There are fewer than 3,000 specimens in its native habitat of South Africa, and its rarity is at least partially because it is hard to propagate. The last two plants listed here are available for sale at Petra Crist's nursery, Rare Succulents, in Rainbow, California; however because of their rarity and challenges in cultivation and propagation, you may need to be prepared for a price tag that reflects these challenges.

Growing rare and threatened species is challenging and gratifying. It can put your skills as a gardener to the test, but it can also be pleasurable for you to know that you are doing your part to preserve the threatened species of the world. Just be sure that when you buy a specimen it was not taken from its native habitat. That way you can rest easy knowing that you are being part of the solution for rare and endangered plants and not part of the problem.

POTS: WHY DO YOU USE THE ONES YOU USE?

By Sue Haffner

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Have you ever thought about why you use the pots you do for your plants? Here are some factors to consider:

Standard pot - this type is as tall as the diameter of the pot (4 inches across and 4 inches tall);

- Azalea or 3/4 pot this is three quarters the height of the diameter (4 inches across and 3 inches high, for instance);

- Bulb pan - this is one half the height of the diameter (4 inches across and only 2 inches high).

Many succulent growers prefer the azalea pot size, chiefly for aesthetic reasons, as many specimen plants display better in such pots.

The standard pot, especially for smaller plants, may taper too much and prove to be unstable. You run the risk of knocking over and damaging a prized plant. Watering is also affected by the type of pot used. When you pour water onto the surface of your pot, the force of gravity will act longer on the taller column of water and pull more water out of the pot. This is needed for aeration and for pulling excess salts and fertilizer out of the pot, rather than collecting on the soil surface.

To restate the watering situation: if you have two pots that hold the same volume of soil and one is tall and skinny and the other is short and wide, more water will remain in the soil of the shorter pot. You won't have to water as often, as the short pots don't dry out as fast.

The pot should be large enough to provide a comfortable finger width between the edge of the pot and the plant (spines included), for globular plants. Tall, columnar plants should have a pot whose diameter is about one half their heights. A cluster or clump of plants generally has a shallower root system than a single plant of the same diameter. It is also growing more laterally than vertically, so you should allow more space between the pot and plant.

Clay, plastic, or other materials? Well, clay pots, of course, allow water to evaporate out from all sides. Clay will also allow water in from all sides (such as by overhead spraying or from capillary matting). This exchange works to keep the roots cool, as well. Plastic keeps the soil wetter longer by allowing evaporation to occur only from the soil surface. Also, plastic pots stay free of salt build-up and algae growth longer than clay pots do.

Pots made of styrofoam, glass, or glazed ceramics tend to act much like the plastic pots. Pot colors? Dark colors absorb most of the light that hits them, while white or light colors reflect a lot of light. Algae may grow on the insides of white pots if they sit where they are hit by direct sunlight. If your plastic pots are subject to the vagaries of temperature throughout the year, they will deteriorate, grow brittle and crumble at your touch. Green pots seem to last longer than white pots.

Round or square? We have more aesthetic considerations here. If your plant is more-or-less round, put it in a round pot. Still, many succulents defy classification as to shape, which no doubt has led to the many free-form artist's pots you see used for specimen plants.



Echeveria 'Dusty Rose', Echeveria 'Cubic Frost' cristata, Othonna capensis 'String of Rubies' 9 of 13
Photo by Monica Mosack

POTS

(CONT. FROM PAGE 9)

How about the drainage? We all know that it is possible to grow succulents in containers without drainage holes because we've seen this in the collection of one of our members! Still, most of us use pots with holes. Most commercial plastic pots have large drainage holes, so large, in fact that your soil mix escapes through them. Some of us use pieces of paper towel, used clothes dryer sheets, squares of hosiery material, squares of window screening, etc., in the bottom of the pot to hold in the soil. The paper will eventually deteriorate, but, by then, the plant's root ball may have grown enough to hold the soil. Top dressing: most succulent growers use gravel of various sizes and colors to top dress the soil in the pots. This can also keep a tippy plant supported; can keep the base of the plant drier, thus reducing the possibility of rot. Also, the gravel is decorative. Bear in mind that the top dressing also can make it difficult to judge whether the plant needs watering. Figure out a means whereby you can check the soil under the gravel.

Should you water newly repotted plants? The standard advice you read in all the books and articles is that you need to let your plant sit for several days to a week while any root damage that may have occurred will heal. Generally, the authors of these books are writing from climates unlike ours, where plants may be subject to extended periods of dark, cold, damp weather where they are in danger of attack by fungi. Some growers in our area water in their newly repotted plants just a bit, to settle the soil and have never noticed any ill effects. You can decide for yourself which is the better course to take. Also, don't put a newly repotted plant directly out in the sun. Let it rest for awhile in bright shade.

Remember that there is no perfect system that works for everyone. Experiment a bit and develop your own best technique. Good luck!

Touring Wanda Mallen and Gary Vincent's stunning garden...

BY LORIE JOHANSEN

is a wonderful experience for those who have never seen it, like my guest, Rosa; and for those who have returned many times, like myself. Thank you for sharing all your hard work resulting in perfectly manicured garden "rooms"; a perfect place to spend a Saturday morning. I am a proud plant parent of one of the plants for sale—*Euphorbia kondoi* which is featured in the newsletter of the Henry Shaw Cactus and Succulent Society: <https://hscactus.org/resources/plants-of-the-month/euphorbia-kondoi-2008/> And yes, Wanda, it has been repotted, fertilized and has already flowered in July!

We hope to return in 2023!



Lorie Johansen



Wanda Mallen

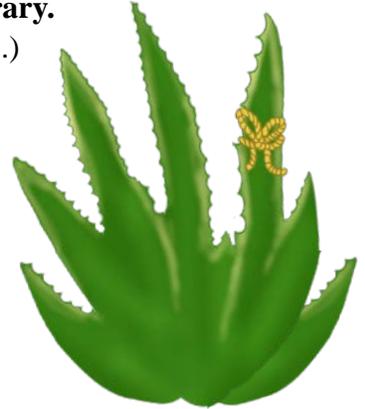
Library

THESE BOOKS ARE LONG PAST DUE!!!

Please search your home & return these books to the PCSS Library.

(Members only want the books to be available for other members.)

contact barbara raab: raabbjo@gmail.com



PCSS #601 - **A History of Succulent Plants**, Gordon Rowley

PCSS #770 - **Aloes & Agaves - in cultivation**, Jeff Moore

PCSS #203 - **Ariocarpus et cetera: The special smaller genera of Mexican cacti**,

John Pilbeam & Bill Weightman

PCSS #39 - **Crassula - A Grower's Guide**, Gordon Rowley

PCSS #547 - **Euphorbia Journal, Vol. 6**, Herman Schwartz & Ron LaFon

PCSS #656 - **Pachyforms II: Bonsai Succulents**, Phillipe Vosjoli & Rudy Lime

PCSS #654 - **Soft Succulents - Aeoniums, Echeverias, Crassulas, Sedums, Kalanchoes and Related Plants**, Jeff Moore

PCSS #449 - **Teratopia - The World of Cristate and Variegated Succulents**, Gordon Rowley

PCSS #203 - **Xerophile: Cactus Photographs from Expeditions of the Obsessed**, Cactus Store



REST IN PEACE

Mary Nelson

Long time member and Vice President, Don Nelson informed us that his wife Mary (PCSS member) passed this month. Mary and Don have been married for 55 years sharing a love of gardening, nature, family, and felines.

Services will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church (845 Chestnut Street, Escondido) on Monday, August 22nd at 11am with a light lunch to follow.

The family welcomes donations to the San Diego Humane Society to support their community cat program as an expression of sympathy and in lieu of flowers. (<https://www.sdhumane.org/support-us/ways-to-give/tribute-gifts.html>) Over the years, several cats, some feral, have found their way into the Nelson home and hearts.



AUGUST
Garden Brags



Mammillaria boscana
Photo by Lorie Johansen



Hoya carnosa
Photo by Lorie Johansen



Echinopsis sp.
Photo by Deborah Pearson



Echinopsis spachiana
Photo by Deborah Pearson

IN LOVING MEMORY

Peggy Regan



It is with sadness that we report that Margaret (Peggy) Regan passed away in January. She and her husband, Mike Regan, joined PCSS in 2003. They regularly attended our meetings and she will be missed.



PALOMAR CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Kopfstein - President

info@palomarcactus.org

Don Nelson - Vice-President

Brita Miller - Past President, Meeting Set-Up

Teri Shusterman - Treasurer

Moni Waiblinger - Secretary

Charlyne Barad - Show Chair, Member at Large

Lorie Johansen - Member at Large, Guest & New Member

Ambassador, Plant of the Month Articles

David Buffington - Member at Large, Brag Points

Dean Karras - Show Chair

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monicaatpcss@gmail.com or text 619-379-4303

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Annie Morgan - Website and Facebook

info@palomarcactus.org

Dean Karras - Program, Plant Expert, Instagram

gnoisnurseries@gmail.com

Dennis Miller - Cash Register at Monthly Meetings Sandy

Wetzel-Smith, Bruce Barry - Refreshments Barbara Raab

- Librarian

Kevin Smith - Brag Table

Francis Granger - Guest & New Member Ambassador

Brian Magone - Exchange Table

Russel Ray - Photographer, Website, AV

Julie Kort - Name Tag Drawing Plants

SAVE THE DATE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25
FOR
RICK & KEVIN'S
FANTASTIC PLANT SALE
SEE COMING EBLAST FOR
MORE DETAILS!

Succulent Eye Candy



*Agave attenuata 'Ray of Light', Dudleya antonii,
Mangave 'Falling Waters'*
Photo by Monica Mosack

Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

The North San Diego County C & S Club!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Click here for a printable form:

<https://www.palomarcactus.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Membership-Form-6-27-22-1.pdf>

2022 MEETING SCHEDULE

Date - Speaker and Topic - Plant of the Month

September 24th	Crystal Eckman	Melocactus
	Melocactus species, Propagation and Culture	
October 8-9	Show & Sale	
November 19th	Ron Parker	Tephrocactus
	Chasing Centuries: Ancient Anthropogenic Agave Cultivars of AZ	
December 17th	Holiday Party - Moni's Clubhouse	

Social Media

Website: www.palomarcactus.org
Instagram: [Palomar.cactus.succulent.org](https://www.instagram.com/palomarcactus.succulent.org)
Email: info@PalomarCactus.org

Facebook for admin notices:
[@Palomarcactusandsucculentsociety](https://www.facebook.com/@Palomarcactusandsucculentsociety)

Facebook group for members to post:
[Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society Group](https://www.facebook.com/PalomarCactusandSucculentSocietyGroup)