

# Cactus & Succulent

## Newsletter of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society

The North San Diego County Cactus and Succulent Club

Volume 69, Number 7

August 2023

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Remember, no regular meeting in August because of our potluck picnic!



### August 2023 Potluck Picnic

Saturday, August 26, 2023

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

Please sign up to bring food to share, thanks!

See details on pages 2 & 3.

### September Excitement!



At the Sept. meeting, Create a gorgeous pumpkin centerpiece just in time for the fall holidays!

Bring your own pumpkin and some cuttings to share, and take home a creation to decorate your table or porch for the next two months! More details next month.

Moni and Libbi will show us how it's done



PCSS welcomes new member  
Michele Crosby!

### Plants of the Month 2023

August	Picnic
September	Tylecodon
October	Mini Aloes
November	Schlumbergera
December	Holiday Party



# Potluck Picnic at the

## Palomar College Cactus & Succulent Garden

August 26, 11:30 am—2:30 pm

This year we will once again visit and picnic at 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.

**Location—The garden is on Palomar College grounds on the corner of Comet Circle and West Mission. Parking is in Lot 3, next to the garden gate. The ground is a little uneven and there is one slight hill.**

**Important: we need three tables for the food, etc. If you have one or more folding tables, please let Brita know as soon as you can. [BritaMiller1@gmail.com](mailto:BritaMiller1@gmail.com)**

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

**Amenities—Restrooms are meager.** According to Kevin, there will be an “emergency” restroom available at the garden site. It is part of the tool shed in a small storage room in the back of the shed. It's like a porta potty with no running water, but has toilet paper, hand towels, and hand sanitizer. If your needs are not an emergency then the main campus restrooms will be available.

**Food—Please bring one of your favorite dishes to share.** There was a sign-up sheet at the July meeting. **If you weren't at the meeting, please let Charlyne or Brita know what you plan to bring. Thanks!**

For more information about the garden, check out these links:

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

<https://www.palomar.edu/facilities/cactus-garden/> (general garden info)



# Food Signup (so far) for August 26, 2023 Picnic

## Appetizers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>
Barbara Watzke	Cheese



## Salads / Side Dishes

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>
Charlyne Barad	Quinoa Salad
Lyn Mardesich	Grapes
Prapa Taylor	Salad
Lois Walag	Sumi Salad
Richard Miller	Cottage Cheese & Fruit Salad
Annie Morgan	Cucumber Salad



## Main Dishes

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>
Lorie Johansen	Cheese
Chris Barkley	Polish Sausage



## Desserts

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>
Patti Nelson	Cookies
Suzi Harris	Brownies
Sandy Wetzels-Smith	Cookies



## Beverages

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>
PCSS	water



**As you can see, we will need lots more food than is signed up for. Please let Charlyne or Brita know if we can add your name and dish to this list. Thanks!**

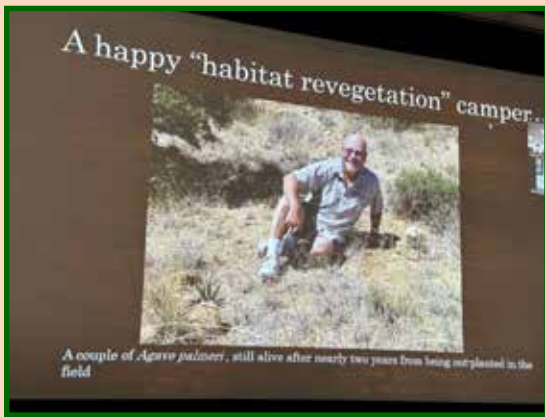
**Charlyne: [charbar6000@gmail.com](mailto:charbar6000@gmail.com) Brita: [britamiller1@gmail.com](mailto:britamiller1@gmail.com)**



# July Meeting Recap



Our July speaker was Steve Platt, cactus and succulent hobbyist and member of Bat Conservation International. He works with that organization to plant agaves under bat migration routes to help provide food for them as they migrate. Steve spoke and showed slides via Zoom using our new Zoom account. He said their goal is to plant 300,000 + agaves on 50,000 acres of land and to establish 20 greenhouses by 2025. He mentioned that the primary migrants in this area are the Mexican Long-Nosed Bat and the Lesser Long-Nosed Bat. The agave species they plant are *Agave palmerii* and *Agave parryi*.





# More July Meeting Recap

Robert and Lorie talked about the San Marcos Library project. Every month a club member lends a plant to be displayed at the library. Lorie delivers and retrieves the plants and gives library workers watering instructions from the plant owner. Lorie described a seeds project that the library has to collect seeds and have children plant them. She showed a box of seeds already donated by PCSS members and made envelopes available for other members to donate seeds.



First and second library plants were loaned by Robert Kopfstein and Charlyne Barad. Shown with information signs.



Quote from Lorie, “Many thanks to the tall, handsome silver fox who donated these seeds to the San Marcos library seed project.”



Robert auctioned plants while Lorie, our Vanna, displayed them.



Yaaay, we won the bid!



Exchange **table**—plant pulchritude!



Mike and Russell show and explain brag plant winners.



Another great PCSS turnout!

# July Brag Plant Winners

## Intermediate Cactus

By Michelle Leung

- 1<sup>st</sup> May Fong Ho      *Arrojadoa rhodantha*—1  
2<sup>nd</sup> Kevin Smith      *Copiapoa humilis*—2  
3<sup>rd</sup> Charlyne Barad      *Tricocereus bridgesii monstrose*—3

## Advanced Cactus

- 1<sup>st</sup> Russel Ray      *Opuntia phaeacantha* 'Dark Knight' - 4  
2<sup>nd</sup> Russel Ray      *Mammillaria* sp.—5  
3<sup>rd</sup> Russel Ray      *Echinocactus platyacanthus*—6

## Intermediate Succulent

- 1<sup>st</sup> Kevin Smith      *Eulophia petersii*—7  
2<sup>nd</sup> Patti Nelson      *Haworthia* sp.—8  
3<sup>rd</sup> Charlyne Barad      *Crassula corymbulosa*—9

## Advanced Succulent

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mike Nelson      *Carulluma socratrana*—10  
2<sup>nd</sup> Mike Nelson      *Operculicarya decaryi*—11  
3<sup>rd</sup> Moni Waiblinger      *Portulacaria afra*—12

## Intermediate Plant of the Month

- 1<sup>st</sup> David Buffington      *Euphorbia milii*—13

## Advanced Plant of the Month

- 1<sup>st</sup> Russel Ray      *Euphorbia milii* hybd—14  
2<sup>nd</sup> Moni Waiblinger      *Euphorbia milii* variegata—15  
3<sup>rd</sup> Moni Waiblinger      *Euphorbia milii* hybd—16  
3<sup>rd</sup> Russel Ray      *Euphorbia milii* hybd—17



Check out  
the close  
up.













## Lithops

Robert Kopfstein



Plants are amazingly adaptive. They evolve features that are designed to fit into whatever environment they find themselves. Unlike animals that can relocate if they find a particular locale inhospitable, plants are rooted to the spot where they germinated, so to survive, they have to develop morphological structures that cope with the terrain and the weather. For example, the bodhi tree (*Ficus religiosa*) of the Indian subcontinent has leaves that are sharply pointed. This “drip tip” is designed to shed excess water, especially during the monsoon season when the rains are very heavy and plentiful.

Conversely, in South Africa there are cycads that have retractile roots that can pull the base of the plant or the caudex below ground level. This strategy protects against drought, and it also protects the plants against the relatively frequent veld fires. We saw this same feature in the presentation made by Stefan Burger “The Underground Cacti of Chile” at the May 2022 meeting. These geophytic cacti survive the harsh, dry conditions of the Atacama Desert by hunkering down mostly below the rocky soil. They are diminutive in size, so they do not present a large surface area for water loss.

A similar strategy is employed by the lithops, a genus of plants that are also called “living stones” or “pebble plants.” They grow in very rocky soil in the northern Cape Province of South Africa, in parts of Namibia, Botswana, and Angola, and they have developed strategies to survive under very harsh conditions.

Lithops are members of the family aizoaceae (the iceplant group). The name comes from the Greek lithos meaning “stone” and opsis meaning “like.” They were first discovered in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa in 1811 by William J. Burchell, who labeled them *Mesembryanthemum turbiniformis*, but today no one is 100% sure exactly which species he was examining. In 1922 N. E. Brown split out lithops from the mesembs, and other botanists studied the genus; but more than thirty years passed and lithops were little known and rarely cultivated. Finally in 1988 Naureen and Desmond Cole published Lithops, Flowering Stones, a definitive work which included the nomenclature for species/subspecies which is accepted today.

New species are even today being discovered. Basing the separation of species on flower color and leaf patterns, 37 species have been named, and because of the work of horticulturists, there are over 100 cultivars. Work is still ongoing, especially using DNA samples to differentiate species, but some of the current notable species include:

- L. karasmontana
- L. diversa
- L. pseudotrunkatella
- L. solicola
- L. schwantsii







Propagation is mostly by seed, which takes at least two plants because lithops is an outcrosser, not self-fertile. The pollen must come from a second plant. Growing the seed is not particularly difficult, and there are short internet videos on how to plant and care for seedlings.

The morphology of lithops is particularly fascinating. The plant, not unlike the welwitschia, produces only two leaves, mostly subterranean. These leaves are very fleshy because they are the principal water storage sites for the plant. There is no stem, and, for a small plant, there is an extensive root system. The leaves are fenestrated; that is, they have “windows” on the upper surface which consist of a “skin” that is translucent, allowing light in to the interior where there is chlorophyll-containing tissue that can photosynthesize. There are no stomata or respirational pores on the upper skin so there can be no transpirational loss of water.

What makes lithops attractive are the colors on this upper epidermal window. Gray, brown, rust, pink, and green patterns function as a camouflage to protect the plants from predators who might eat them not only for the water stored in the leaves but also the flavor, that of green pepper.

When lithops flower it is quite a show. The daisy-like blossoms are often so large that they obscure the entire plant. The petals are white, yellow, and pink, and they come usually in the fall or early winter after the weather has cooled down a bit. Many species have scented flowers that usually open in the afternoon.

Growing lithops is not too difficult once you understand the growth habits of the plant (This principle applies to just about any plant). They grow in well drained rocky soil: decomposed granite, quartz grit, shale, limestone, schist. There is minimal to no organic component in the mix.

The rainfall in the native habitat is minimal, from 700 millimeters to zero—the plants where no rain falls depend exclusively on dew for their moisture. The trick in growing lithops is knowing when to water-- late spring (when the two old leaves have shriveled and two new leaves are emerging) and in summer. The rule of thumb is when in doubt, do not water. In winter do not water and keep the plants out of our winter rains (winters are dry where they come from).

If you grow lithops be sure to give them a generous clay pot, preferably unglazed, and potting mix that drains well. I use decomposed granite that has been sifted to remove the fine dust. Outdoors give them midday shade. If it gets too hot, they cannot cool themselves with transpiration.

Fertilize minimally with low nitrogen, higher phosphorus fertilizer.

Lithops are not endangered; there are about 1,000 known locales where they exist in small colonies. They are very hard to spot because of their small size and their very effective camouflage. As a result, new colonies and new species are still being discovered.

# Amazing Australia: St. Kilda and Surrounds

Lorie Johansen



We arrived at our Airbnb in the beachy suburb of St. Kilda in Melbourne, Victoria in April 2023. It's a walkable four miles to the central business district and afforded us a quiet enclave to recover from jet lag after an arduous journey of 30+ hours.

The historic St Kilda Botanic Gardens date back to 1859 and are one of the city's best maintained botanic gardens. With more than 800 trees, shrubs and flowering plants, this lush and leafy parkland boasts a serene and scenic setting. It's a small garden that allows a shortcut walk through on the way to the beach.

St. Kilda's past is as colorful as its present. Long considered Melbourne's seaside playground, it was first known for its elite holiday culture in the mid-19th century, before moving into its chapter as a red-light entertainment district in the 1950s and '60s. Today a trip to Melbourne is not complete without a visit to St. Kilda and its strip of palm tree-lined beaches, heritage buildings and eclectic dining scene, reminiscent of a cross between Venice Beach and San Francisco.







# Home Garden Brag Plants



From Marlene Walder



Lois Walag, *Crassula falcata*  
Lois called it "Natural Fireworks!"



Kevin Smith  
*Gymnocalycium pflanzii*



Keith Unbreit, *Crassula falcata*



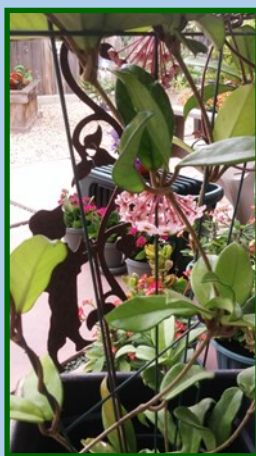
Charlyne Barad

Dragon fruit in bloom



Russel Ray, Agave

Largest plant in his yard.



Martina Reed - Hoya

This is my Hoya plant I grew from a cutting. It took a few years to get this big. It has been flowering nicely for six years now. Unfortunately the flowers all point downwards and are hard to see. But the bees love them.





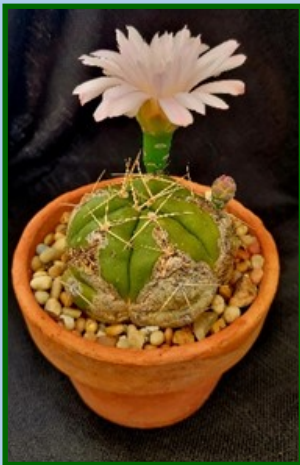


Deborah Pearson – *Peniocereus serpentinus*  
 This cactus is about four feet tall but only maybe two inches in diameter. It still has quite a large, very fragrant flower. Could smell it ten feet away. It bloomed at night- a couple hours after nightfall.



Deborah Pearson,  
*Echinopsis*

Deborah Pearson *Echinopsis* and  
*Echinopsis spachiana*



Lorie Johansen  
*Gymnocalycium horstii*

Lorie Johansen,  
*Adenium arabicum*

Lorie Johansen  
*Echeveria* hybrid, *Notocactus magnificus*, *Gymnocalycium horstii*



Jude Duval

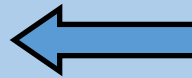
*Cyphostemma juttae*, *Uncarina grandideri*, *Strophocactus testudo*





Michele Crosby  
(new member!)

“Succulents and  
ferns all happy  
together!”



Barbara Raab, Cotyledon



Michelle Leung’s tiny dragon  
fruit plant exploded an  
outrageous flower!

### An idea about Garden Brag Plants

Deborah Pearson has an idea for a plant identification column in the newsletter. When members can't identify a plant, no matter how many apps we try and friends we ask, we could post a photo and ask members to weigh in on identification. The mystery solution could be posted in the next month's newsletter.

What do you think? Ideas are welcome! Thanks!

For a digital copy of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America journal click the link below:

[https://cactusandsucculentsociety.org/TTP\\_Summer\\_2023.pdf](https://cactusandsucculentsociety.org/TTP_Summer_2023.pdf) (This wouldn't open for me by clicking on it, but when I pasted it into my browser I got a look at a fabulous journal!)

San Diego Botanical Garden Activities

<https://sdbg.org/program-calendar/> (Same for this link. It works if pasted into browser, and worth looking at.)

### **CSSA Webinar: Evelyn Durst: Unveiling Nature's Artistry of Succulents** [Registration Link](#)

**Program:** This program is an exploration of plant photography highlighting characteristics and peculiarities of cacti and succulents with many examples and insightful commentary. You will be stimulated to find new approaches and techniques to capture the intriguing aspects of your plants.

## 2023 CSSA Upcoming Activities

- Sep. 2 HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM  
9am-3pm RESERVATIONS REQUIRED  
Info: Reservations: 222.huntington.org, Symposium call 626-405-3571  
Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd. San Marino, CA
- Oct. 1 LONG BEACH CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY ANNUAL AUCTION  
1pm-3:30pm. Info call 714-553-6914  
Women's Club of Bellflower, 9402 Oak St. Bellflower, CA
- Oct. 10 CONEJO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY FALL SALE 9AM-4PM  
558 N. Ventu Park Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320  
Info: www.conejocss.com or conejocss@hotmail.com
- Nov. 3-5 HUNTINGTON FALL PLANT SALE—RESERVATIONS REQUIRED SAT-SUN  
10am-5pm, Info: www.huntington.org. Sale call 628-405-3571  
Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd. San Marino, CA



## Current Board and Volunteers

President—Robert Kopfstein—[president@palomarcactus.org](mailto:president@palomarcactus.org)

Vice President—Dean Karras [gnoxisnursery@gmail.com](mailto:gnoxisnursery@gmail.com)

Past President, Meeting set-up—Brita Miller

Treasurer—Teri Shusterman [treasurer@palomarcactus.org](mailto:treasurer@palomarcactus.org)

Assistant Treasurer—Liz Rozycki

Secretary—Moni Waiblinger

Members at Large—Charlyne Barad, David Buffington, Lorie Johansen

Event Coordinator—Charlyne Barad [eventcoordinator@palomarcactus.org](mailto:eventcoordinator@palomarcactus.org)

Newsletter—Charlyne Barad, Michelle Leung [eventcoordinator@palomarcactus.org](mailto:eventcoordinator@palomarcactus.org)

Brag Points—David Buffington

Brag Table—Kevin Smith

Cash Register at Monthly Meetings—Teri Shusterman, Dennis Miller

Exchange Table—Brian Magone

Facebook - Annie Morgan—[info@palomarcactus.org](mailto:info@palomarcactus.org)

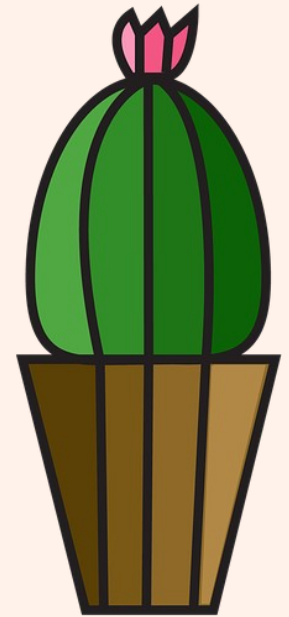
Guest & New Member Ambassador & Plant of the Month—Lorie Johansen

Library—Barbara Raab [librarian@palomarcactus.org](mailto:librarian@palomarcactus.org)

Membership—Richard Miller

Refreshments—Sandy Wetzel-Smith, Bruce Barry

Website—Annie Morgan, Russel Ray



## 2023 Meetings, etc. Schedule

Aug. 26 Picnic at Palomar College

Sept. 23 Jeff Moore, Dudleyas

Sept. 23, Succulent pumpkin workshop

October 28, Kevin Smith, Pests in the Succulent Garden

Nov. 18 Ivon Ramirez, The Hechtias of Mexico  
(Zoom)

Dec. 16 Holiday party

## Social Media

**Website:** [www.palomarcactus.org](http://www.palomarcactus.org)

**Instagram:** [palomar.cactus.succulent.org](https://www.instagram.com/palomar.cactus.succulent.org)

**Email:** [info@palomarcactus.org](mailto:info@palomarcactus.org)

**Facebook group for members:**  
Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society Group

