

Cactus Courier

Newsletter of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society

The North San Diego County Cactus and Succulent Club

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**Meeting Fourth Saturday, July 25,
11:00 am - 3:00 pm
Grace Presbyterian Church, 1450 E.
Vista Way, Vista**

- Speaker Presentation @ 12 noon
- Brag Plant Table closes to entries at 11:30 am.
- Benefit drawing and exchange tables and auction all will be held.
- Plant of the month: **String Succulents**

Important Info Drawing and Exchange Tables

Please bring cuttings or potted plants that are manageable for all to lift and take home. If you must bring plants that bleed white latex, please put them safely in leak-proof plastic bags. The gorgeous, but huge and sticky Euphorbia 'Sticks on Fire' that was brought in recently was not picked up and had to be disposed of by the clean-up crew. The enormous plant had to be broken up to dispose of and it dripped white latex on the blue carpet. Also, a reminder that plants should be free of leaf and dirt litter.

PCSS Welcomes New Members

**Ada Wildberger
Luke Miller**

This Month's Speaker: Nan Sterman Topic: California Dreamin': Gardening in California's Mediterranean Climate



Thanks to California's Mediterranean climate, gardening here is different from anywhere else in America and most places around the world. In this talk, we discuss what it means to live and garden in a Mediterranean climate

Nan talks about soil, rainfall, plants, and techniques for creating productive and beautiful gardens that thrive in our climate. She also shows examples of gorgeous gardens in many different styles, all done with a Mediterranean climate-adapted plant palette.

Nan will also be selling and signing some of her books.

Because Nan is extremely well-known for her books and TV show, *A Growing Passion* originally on KPBS and now on YouTube, her talk will excite interest beyond PCSS members. For that reason, we are opening the July meeting to the public. **PCSS requests a \$5 cash only donation for non-members.**

Nan Grows Gardens... and Gardeners

California based **Nan Sterman** is passionate about plants and gardens. Nan is a pioneer in sustainable landscaping with a focus on California and other low-rainfall climates.

Nan takes a wholistic approach to connecting plants, people, and the planet. She advocates for gardens that work *with* the local climate and environment rather than battle against them.

Nan wears several "hats," among them: plant expert, garden designer, teacher, author, botanist, award-winning journalist, TV host and producer. (More on page 2)



Nan Sterman continued

Some examples of Nan's work include:

- Her most recent book, *Hot Color, Dry Garden*, a how-to guide for creating color-filled, drought resilient gardens.
- Hundreds of gardening articles for newspapers, magazines, websites, and marketing clients too.
- The award-winning public TV show, *A Growing Passion*. Forty-eight episodes originally produced for public television are available on YouTube. (link below)
- Nan Sterman's Garden School guides students along the path to becoming happy, successful gardeners:
 - *Strong Starts* teaches students how to grow summer vegetables starting from seed.
 - *Fundamentals of Southern California Gardening* empowers gardeners to understand their gardens, based on the how's and the why's of successful gardening in the region's dry, Mediterranean climate.
 - *Mastering Southern California Gardening* for graduates of *Fundamentals*, focuses on plants, design, and other valuable gardening topics.
 - *GardenWise* offers several subscription levels that deliver monthly menus of timely garden tasks for ornamental gardens, edible gardens, and houseplants along with a "plant of the month" that introduces gardeners to Nan's favorite, regionally appropriate plants.
 - *On-demand short courses* cover a range of topics for gardeners in Southern California and other Mediterranean climate regions, both hobbyists and professionals: water-wise gardening, the basics of drip irrigation, how to grow and use culinary herbs, houseplants, bulbs, fruit trees, seasonal maintenance, and more
- Social media content on Instagram and Facebook. Nan's 12-year-old San Diego Gardener Facebook group, for example, supports more than 21,000 active gardeners across San Diego County.
- Leading garden tours across the globe so far including Europe, South Africa, Costa Rica, Australia, and around the US. In November, Nan is taking a group to Japan.

Nan Sterman's approach dates to the 1970s, when she was involved in the first wave of the sustainability movement. Nan trained at the Integral Urban House in Berkeley, California, earned a botany degree from Duke University, a master's in biology from UC Santa Barbara, and a master's in instructional design from San Diego State University.

Prior to delving into the gardening world as a profession, Nan spent a decade creating curricula, training programs, and educational materials for Fortune 500 companies, zoos, aquaria, museums, schools, and not-for-profit organizations. Her ability to take complex information and create effective educational programs is one of her greatest strengths, and a major source of her successes.

Links:

Nan Sterman, WaterWise Gardener www.WaterWiseGardener.com

Nan Sterman's Garden School www.NanStermanGardenSchool.com

Instagram: [NanStermanWaterWise](https://www.instagram.com/NanStermanWaterWise)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WaterWiseGardener

A Growing Passion on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@agrowingpassion>

June Brag Table Winners

2026 June Brag Table Winners

Novice Cactus

1st Lynn Cahill

Mammillaria elongata 'Copper King' — 1

Intermediate Cactus

1st Charlyne Barad

Cylindropuntia fulgida var. *mamillata* — 2

Advanced Cactus

1st Kathy McNair

Coleocephalocereus aureus — 3

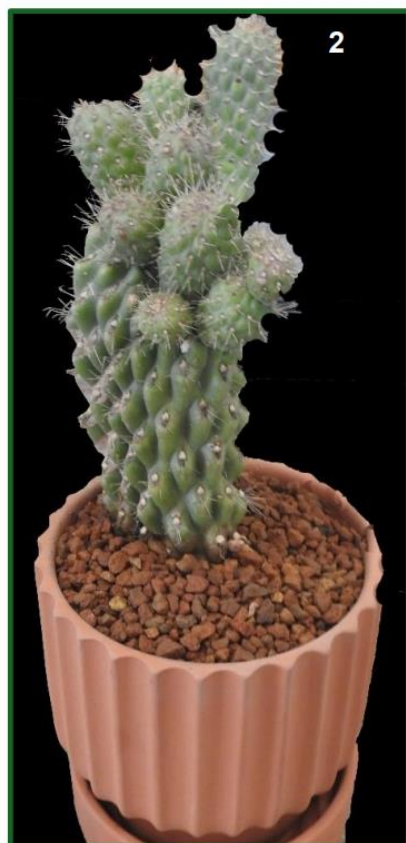
2nd Kathy McNair

Cylindropuntia sp. — 4

Novice Succulent

1st Lynn Cahill

Echeveria violencia — 5



June Brag Table Winners

continued

Intermediate Succulent

1st Paulilne Wong
1st Lois Walag
2nd Charlyne Barad
3rd Patti Nelson

Aeonium 'Pink Witch' — 6
Aeonium 'Super Bang' — 7
Dudleya anthonyi — 8
Adenium obesa — 9

Advanced Succulent

1st Candy & Jerry Garner
2nd Candy & Jerry Garner
3rd Mike Nelson
3rd Kathy McNair

Ceraria namaquensis — 10
Monsonia vanderlindiae — 11
Eulophia maculata — 12
Haworthia truncata 'Lime Green' — 13



June Brag Table Winners continued

Plant of the Month – Intermediate

1st Lois Walag *Opuntia cochenillifera f. variegata* — 14

Plant of the Month – Advanced

1st Jeff McNair *Opuntia erinacea* — 15

Dish/Bowl Garden – Novice

1st Lynn Cahill *Mammillaria elongatum*, — 16
 Sedum nussbaumerianum

Dish/Bowl Garden – Advanced

1st Libby Salvo *Mixed* — 17

2nd Sherman Blench *Mixed* — 18

14



15



16



17



18



HOME GARDEN BRAG

by Joan Herskowitz

Share an especially nice section of your garden, a plant that is in the ground, a plant that bloomed between meetings, or one that is too large to bring to the Brag Table. Earn 2 points for each published photo. You may send in a maximum of two photos. Send submissions to: jmherskowitz@yahoo.com. SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 1st day of each month.



Notocactus Schlosseri

Candy & Jerry Garner



Titanopsis schwantesii

Norb Roden



Monvillea spegazzinii f. cristata

Norb Roden



Hedge of **Portulacaria afra** (Elephant Bush)

Bill Modi



Aloe sp.

Charlyne Barad



Epiphyllum 'Glow Bug'

Lori Brandt



Epiphyllum hybrid

Lori Brandt



Gymnocalycium tricanthum

Candy & Jerry Garner



Nephrocactus articulatus v. papyracanthus
Don DeTar



Aloe distans
Don DeTar



Plectranthus neochilus
Kristie DeTar



Cleistocactus winteri
Chet Reed



Senecio barbertonicus
Kristie DeTar



Tillandsia rothii (bromeliad)
Tom McCarter



Aloe hybrid
Joan Herskowitz



Crassula perfoliata v. falcata
Tom McCarter



Echeveria hybrid
Pauline Lien Wong



Echinopsis silvestrii
Suzie Harris



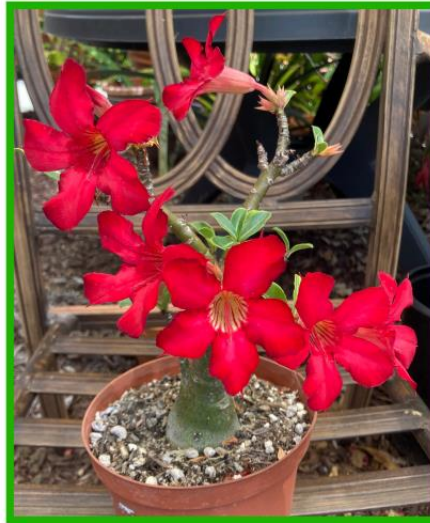
Cleistocactus winterii
Suzie Harris



Aloe traskii with Mourning Dove Nest
Erik Gronborg



Alcantarea 'Merlot' (front) &
Aechmea blanchetiana
(bromeliads)
Lorie Johansen



Adenium obesum
Lynn Cahill



Aloe distans
Lynn Cahill



Ferocactus emoryi ssp. rectispinus
Russel Ray



Opuntia santa-rita
Russel Ray



Euphorbia lambii
Joan Herskowitz



Echeveria 'Lipstick'

Stacy Day



Vignette with **Aloe nobilis** & **Portulacaria afra**

Stacy Day



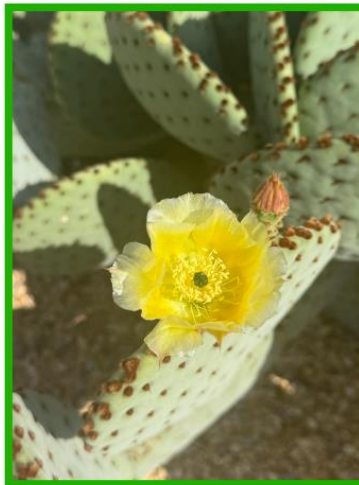
Harrisia pomanensis

Deborah Pearson



Portulacaria afra

Harold Dunn



Opuntia santa-rita

Jeff McNair



Echinopsis pentlandii

Kathy McNair



Mammillaria thornberi

Kathy McNair



Aeonium 'Cabernet'

Lois Walag



Portulacaria afra

Lottie Foster



Pachycereus Pringlei

Jeff McNair

PLANT OF THE MONTH

String Succulents

by Russel Ray



String succulents are a group of popular trailing plants known for their delicate, cascading stems and uniquely shaped leaves. Because of their vining nature, they are excellent choices for hanging baskets, high shelves, or spilling over the edges of containers.

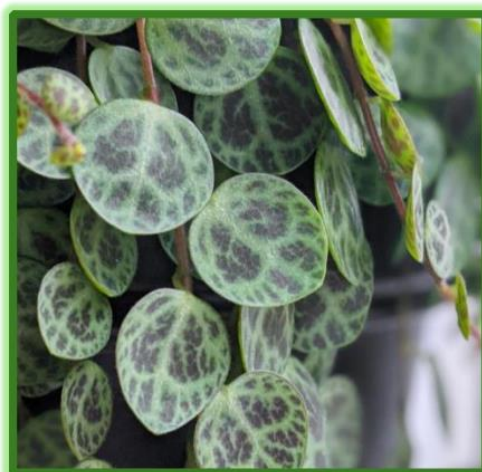
Most string varieties are very easy to propagate via stem cuttings. Simply snip a strand, remove the bottom leaves, and lay the cutting on moist soil, or let the cut end callous over and plant directly. While care varies

slightly depending on the plant, these general guidelines will help them thrive:

- They prefer bright, indirect sunlight. A few hours of gentle morning sun is ideal, but harsh afternoon rays can easily scorch their delicate foliage.
- They hold water in their fleshy leaves, so err on the side of underwatering. Use the "soak and dry" method: soak the soil thoroughly, but wait until it is completely dry before watering again.
- Plant them in a porous, fast-draining cactus or succulent mix. Amending the soil with perlite or pumice is highly recommended.

Six of the most popular string succulents are listed here:

- String of Pearls (*Senecio rowleyanus*): Features small, spherical, pea-like leaves strung along thin stems.
- String of Dolphins (*Senecio peregrinus*): Leaves curve and fold to remarkably resemble a pod of leaping dolphins.
- String of Bananas (*Senecio radicans*): Fast-growing with larger, curved, crescent-shaped leaves.
- String of Hearts (*Ceropegia woodii*): Delicate, heart-shaped leaves on thread-like purple stems.
- String of Turtles (*Peperomia prostrata*): Small, round leaves with stunning, dark green patterns that look like turtle shells.
- Ruby Necklace (*Othonna capensis*): Features bean-shaped leaves on vibrant purple stems that turn a deep magenta when exposed to sunlight.



El Cajon Library

Plant of the Month

Sponsored by Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

Fockea edulis

by Russel Ray



Fockea edulis (picture at left of plant loaned by Russel Ray) is native to the Cape Provinces of South Africa where it is widespread in arid regions, dry savannas, and rocky slopes.

The caudex is a large, woody, bulbous tuber that stores water. Raising the caudex above the soil can create a dramatic presentation that is quite popular among succulent and bonsai collectors. When the caudex remains underground, it grows faster and can reach a size up to 24 inches.

One of its common names is Hottentot bread due to the milky, somewhat sweet flavor of the caudex which is sometimes gathered from the wild for local use although processed before eating. The plant's latex sap is poisonous.

Although it shows decreased activity from January to April, it never goes into complete dormancy, always carrying some leaves on its slender, twining



stems which can grow up to 13 feet in length. The small, star-shaped flowers (→) are pale green to white-green, and pollinated by fruit flies. Because plants are dioecious, male and female plants are needed to produce seeds which appear in a gray-green seed pod (↓ ↘).



Fockea edulis is easy to cultivate and hardy when kept reasonably dry and watered just enough to keep the tuber from shriveling. Plants can tolerate occasional light frosts with temperatures dropping as low as 28°F.

The plant displayed here is 9 years old, gets 8-16 hours of sun each day depending on Spring, Summer, Winter, or Fall, and annual rainfall from 15" (2022) to 70" (2019, yes 70", not a typo). Soil is a 40/60 mix of organic/pumice, and it is in a large, shallow

pot which allows the soil to dry out quickly. I do not fertilize it, leaving it to rainfall to do that. It has survived low temperatures of 28°F for three consecutive nights and highs of 100-118°F for 41 consecutive days in 2020.

2026 MEETING DATES, PLANT OF THE MONTH, SPEAKERS & TOPICS

We are doing something different this year in that the plant of the month has been chosen from lists of birth plants (similar to birth stones).

July 25

Plant of the month: String succulents

Speaker: Nan Sterman, California-Dreamin' - Gardening in a Mediterranean climate.



August 22

Plant of the month: Euphorbia

Speaker: Woody Minnich, Pachypodiums



September 26

Plant of the month: Astrophytum

Speaker: Dylan Zoller, Jewels of the Brazilian highlands



October 24 — Fall Festival and Sale

Plant of the month: None

Speaker: None

November 21

Plant of the month: Schlumbergera

Speaker: Cristy Brenner, Cactus adventure in Argentina and Chile



December 19 — Holiday Party

Plant of the month: None

Speaker: None



PREVIOUS MEETINGS IN 2026

January 24

Plant of the month: Echinopsis

Speaker: Diana Lindsay, Plants in Anza Borrego used by native peoples



February 28

Plant of the month: Hoya

Speaker: Marie Sinovich, Desert animals of Anza Borrego

March 28

Plant of the month: Aloe

Speaker: Jeff Moore, Succulent Road Trip - Gardens from San Francisco to San Diego



April 25 — Spring Festival and Sale

Plant of the month: None

Speaker: None

May 23 — Picnic at Palomar College

Plant of the month: None

Speaker: None

June 27

Plant of the month: Opuntia

Speaker: Antonio Rangel, The gardens at Palomar College -
Landscaping for education and conservation



[Click here for more on Nan Sterman](#)

PALOMAR CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Board Members & Officers

President - Joe Cobb president@palomarcactus.org
Vice President - Sherman Blench
Treasurer - Teri Shusterman treasurer@palomarcactus.org
Secretary - Moni Waiblinger
Director at Large, Assistant to the Treasurer - Liz Rozycki
Director at Large - Julian Duval
Director at Large - Martina Reed
Director at Large & SDCSS Liaison - Brita Miller



Other Volunteers

Event Coordinators - Charlyne Barad, Brita Miller eventcoordinator@palomarcactus.org
Spring & Fall Festivals Chair & Sales - Brita Miller
Show & Presentations - Charlyne Barad Plant Donations - Lorie Johansen, Sherman Blench
Membership - Richard Miller membership@palomarcactus.org
Publicity (print) - Tom McCarter (online) - Lou Harris
Website & Club Email Management - Annie Morgan, Russel Ray
www.palomarcactus.org info@palomarcactus.org

Monthly Meetings:

Monthly Meeting Set Up - Brita Miller, Lorie Johansen, Charlyne Barad
Monthly Meeting Clean Up - Brita Miller, Liz Rozycki, Moni Waiblinger, Graciela Conde
Brag Table Set Up - Libbi Salvo, Barbara Raab, Stacy Day
Brag Table Judging Team - Mike Nelson, Debra Lee Baldwin, Wanda Mallen
Brag Table Photographer - Charlyne Barad, Libbi Salvo
Brag Table Point Tally - David Buffington Garden Brag Point Tally - Annie Morgan
Refreshments - Sandy Wetzel-Smith, Bruce Barry, Art Schadeberg
Program Coordinator, Plant Auction - Robert Kopfstein
Meeting Sales Cashiers - Teri Shusterman, Liz Rosycki
Meeting A/V - Russel Ray Ken Brown - starting in September
Exchange Table - Brian Magone Benefit Drawing - Martina Reed
Visitor & New Member Ambassadors - Lorie Johansen, Brita Miller
Name Badge Drawing - Julie Kort
Additional Meeting Volunteers - Stacy Day, Lottie Foster, Laura Fish

Newsletter Team:

Charlyne Barad - Coordinator
Russel Ray - Plant of the Month, Library Plant of the Month, Collator & Distributor
Joan Herskowitz - Garden Brag Page
Brita Miller - Spring & Fall Festivals and Holiday Party Recaps, misc.
Winston Chan - Miscellaneous Pages
Wanda Mallen - Proofreader