Cactus Courier

Newsletter of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society

The North San Diego County Cactus and Succulent Club

www.palomarcactus.org Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

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This Month's Speaker: Cristy Brenner

Topic: Cactus Adventure in Argentina and Chile



Cristy Brenner will share slides of a cactus tour to Argentina and Chile in November of 2024, with Plant Expeditions (Guillermo Rivera). The tour was perfectly timed for the spring blooming of the numerous cacti species in many different habitats.

.Cristy's favorite plants are actually bromeliads, but since they often grow in the same habitats as cacti, she has also traveled with Plant Expeditions on cactus trips to Brazil (twice), Peru (twice), and Bolivia. (See more on page 2.)

PCSS Welcomes New Members

Eric & Mary Anderson
Sharon Bennett
George Boyd
Zeta Greene
Devon Hedding
Beth Henke
Pennie Leachman
Howard Marks
Jared Petker

Meeting Third Saturday, Nov. 21

(Saturday changed due to Thanksgiving)

11:00 am—3:00 pm

Grace Presbyterian Church, 1450 E. Vista Way, Vista

- Brag Plant Table: **Plants must be labeled and on the table no later than 11:30 am to be judged**.
- Benefit drawing and exchange tables and auction all will be held.
- Plant of the month: **Schlumbergera**

SEARCH FOR PCSS HISTORICAL INFO

Brita Miller is assembling a history of PCSS. To that end she needs the following:

- Names and term dates of past presidents and board members.
- Copies of old *Cactus Courier* newsletters prior to 2006. Since that was before the newsletters were sent out electronically, Brita is looking for print copies. If you can provide copies, she will copy them and return your originals to you.
- Contact Brita BritaMiller1@gmail.com or 858-776-7216



Information from our speaker, Cristy Brenner about her trip to Argentina and Brazil:



The trip began in Cordoba, Argentina, where Cristy's group traveled north along the eastern Andes, eventually heading west across the high Andes and the Atacama Desert to descend to coastal Chile. They then traveled south along the Chilean coast, where in some areas the landscape was dominated by the many different species of Copiapoa. They eventually headed back towards Argentina and crossed the very scenic high Andes for a second time, reaching elevations above 15,000'.



The tour was perfectly timed for the spring blooming of the numerous cacti species in many different habitats. The trip covered 3,293 miles (5,270 kilometers) and included 125 different species of cacti. Cristy has traveled on a total of fourteen different tours to South America with Plant Expeditions, primarily in search of bromeliads. As a retired geography professor, she has visited all of the continents and has also photographed bromeliads in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, Trinidad, Tobago, and Venezuela. In this presentation there will be plenty of blooming cacti, a few bromeliads, and endless beautiful desert and mountain landscapes to enjoy.



Cristy took a beautiful bromeliad (shown on page 1) to Saddleback college where she taught geography. It was at the college over thirty years ago that Robert Kopfstein invited her to attend a bromeliad meeting. She has not missed a meeting since, unless she was traveling, usually to South America to see bromeliads in habitat. Some of the tours also included many cacti in the drier areas

She is a bromeliad judge and has spoken at many Bromeliad Society International conferences, including one in Australia. She is very thankful to Robert for introducing her to these wonderful plants that have greatly enriched her retirement from teaching.





Fall Sale

Photos by Charlyne Barad, Lorie Johansen and Brita Miller
Captions by Brita

A very special thank you to all the volunteers who helped put the Fall Show and Sale together and made it such a success!!!



Francis Granger and Richard Miller greeting members and visitors.



Andrei Brauman has his cacti ready for customers.



⇦Julie Kort at the Azania plants tables. Photos of the Old World Garden at the Safari Park volunteers hung from the tables.



⇨ Scott Malcolm sold some of his longtime favorite plants from his personal collection, letting them go to new home.

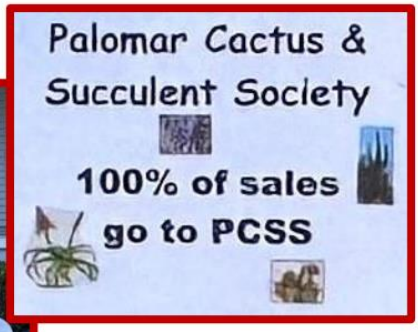


Brita Miller, event chair, is checking to see if everything is set up and that the sellers are happy.



Susan Snow and Windy Chen were ready to watch customers' plants while they look at the show and attend the workshops and presentation.





There were 10 tables of beautiful, donated plants.

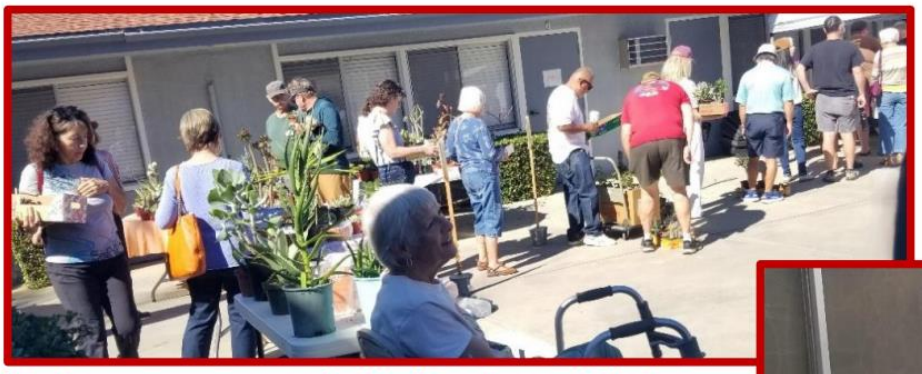




Long time member Mike Regan, on the right, was early in line.



A very happy customer.



Customers were very patient with only one of the two cash registers working.



Julian and Leslie Duval covered the Paid Hold table.



Teri Shusterman and Lynn Cahill looking at the sales totals.



Jerry and Candy Garner with Bill O'Daniel. A great day sharing time with friends and an opportunity to sell some pots.





At Mike and Patti Nelson's table Lori Brandt is looking for plants for her new pots.



With this crowd there must be some special plants.







Windy Chen's popular pots.



Jeff and Kathy McNair

Fall Show







So many beautiful plants!

Thank you members for
bringing your plants in to share!



How did these guys get in? A Halloween trick?



Bill DiAngelo, Sherman Blench, Kathy McNair, Martina Reed
and another member share a little lunch and conversation.



Always lots of yummy food!

Pumpkin Decorating Workshops



Lots of donated cuttings to choose from.



Lottie Foster at the sign-in table with some finished pumpkins.



Stacy Day, right, shares some tips.



Libbi Salvo coordinated set up, and demonstrated how to decorate pumpkins.



← Kathy McNair working on her pumpkin. ↓





Claire Ehrlinger is hard at work adding the finishing touches to her pumpkin.



Windy Chen with her cute pumpkin.



Robert Kopfstein shared lots of good information in his presentation on winter growers.



My what big eyes you have. Who do you belong to?

Fall Show & Sale People's Choice Winners

Novice Level
Lynn Cahill
Cleistocactus sp



Best In Show



Intermediate Level
Chris Barkley
Pelargonium sp.

Advanced Level
Julian Duval
Adenium obesum

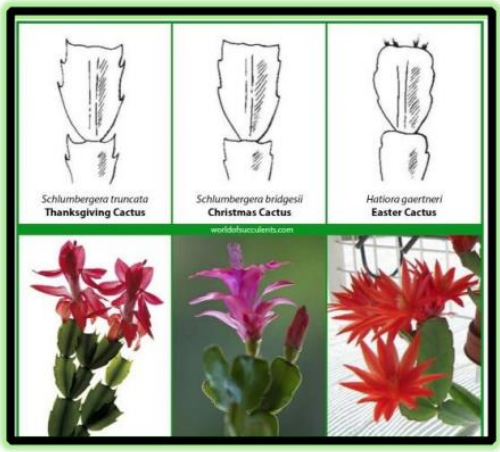


PLANT OF THE MONTH

Schlumbergera

by Russel Ray





Schlumbergera (pronounced with the accent on the 'ber' and a soft g on 'gera.' It is a small genus of cacti native to the coastal mountains of southeastern Brazil at altitudes from 2,300 feet to 9,120 feet. Plants are epiphytic or lithophytic, growing on moss-covered tree branches or in rock crevices, often in small pockets of substrate formed from decayed leaves and other vegetation, and in habitats that are shady with high humidity. They can form sizeable shrubs of up to 4 feet. Depending on source, there are six or nine species currently recognized. Common names generally refer to their flowering season: Thanksgiving cactus, Christmas cactus, Easter cactus, and holiday cactus. There often is a lot of confusion between the plants, so I have included a nice graphic (⇦) to help.

They are great as house plants, but too much water or too little water can cause problems, so keep the soil just moist throughout the year to avoid them. A free-draining, humus-rich, acidic soil with an inert material (grit or sharp sand) is recommended as a growing medium. They grow best with partial shade and a temperature between 70 and 80°F and do not tolerate temperatures of less than 50°F. Damage can be caused by exposure to more than small amounts of sunlight. Too much light causes stems to take on a reddish coloration; however, very low light levels will prevent flowering. Day length is important in flowering; continuous darkness for at least 12 hours is necessary to induce bud formation. A period of about 8 days with 16 hours of darkness has been shown to cause flower buds to form.



Most of the popular house plants are cultivars with flowers in white, pink, yellow, orange, red, or purple. Beginning in the 1950s, hundreds of new cultivars were produced with a wide range of flower colors which had not been available before, including the first true yellow to be sold commercially, *Schlumbergera* 'Gold Charm.' (⇨) Breeders aimed for plants which grew strongly, were upright rather than pendulous at the point of sale, had many flowers or buds, and were adapted to living as house plants. Flowers are adapted for pollination by hummingbirds: tubular flowers with abundant nectar, and colors towards the red end of the spectrum. Most species require cross-pollination to set seed. If the flower is fertilized, a fleshy fruit forms, either smooth or with ribs. The brown or black seeds are about 1 mm in diameter. The fruits appear to be adapted for distribution by birds which eat the seeds and pulp. Propagation can be achieved by using short pieces of stem, allowing them to dry for 1–7 days to callus at the broken end.



Plants are remarkably free from pests and diseases. Two significant insect pests are aphids on shoots, buds, and flowers, and root mealybugs. Stems and roots can be rotted by diseases caused by fungi and similar organisms; these include infections by species of Fusarium (a fungus), and Phytophthora and Pythium (both water molds). Approved chemical treatments can be used in the case of insect attacks or these diseases. Aphids, mealybugs, and other invertebrate pests can spread viruses. Symptoms vary with the species, but a loss of vigor is usual. There is no treatment for virus diseases; sources recommend that infected plants be destroyed.

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.



Lithops sp.
David Buffington



Ariocarpus fissuratus
David Buffington



Euphorbia mauritanica
Tom McCarter



Echinopsis huascha
Lynn Cahill



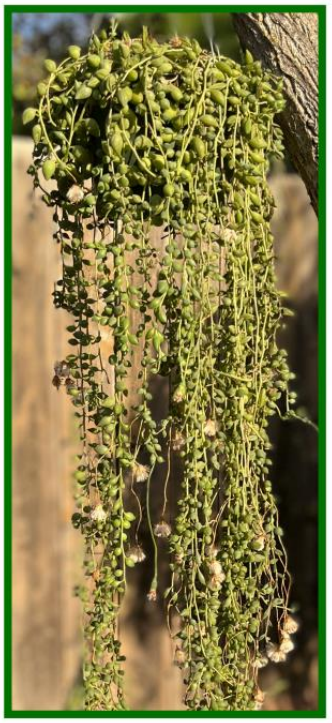
Agave parasana
Tom McCarter



Ferocactus wislizeni
(Fishhook Barrel Cactus)
Jody Stone



Cochemiea poselgeri
Lynn Cahill



Senecio radicans
(String of Bananas)
Susan Harris



Epiphyllum hookeri
Joan Herskowitz



Adenium hybrid
Joan Herskowitz



"Dish Garden"
(Plants on way to PCSS plant sale)
Lori Johansen



Ariocarpus trigonis
Robert Kopfstein



Ariocarpus fissuratus
Robert Kopfstein



Echinopsis 'Edwardian Lady'
Chet Reed



Harrisia pomanensis
Chet Reed



Solanum pyracanthum
(Porcupine Tomato)
Lorie Johansen



Trichocereus hybrid
Deborah Pearson



Aechmea ramosa
Deborah Pearson



Pachyveria 'Royal Flush'
Lois Walag



Echinopsis candicans
(many shoots arose from one that went over)
Russel Ray



Ariocarpus retusus
Kathy McNair



Othonna 'Ruby Necklace'
Kathy McNair



Coryphantha sp.
Jeff McNair



Echinopsis sp.
Jeff McNair



Euphorbia horrida
(African Milk Barrel Cactus)
Stacy Day



Euphorbia lomeli
Stacy Day





Hildewintera hybrids
Adam Rettig



Dracena angelensis
Charlyne Barad

El Cajon Library Plant of the Month

Sponsored by Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society

Tephrocactus articulatus

by Russel Ray

Tephrocactus articulatus plants look appealing in any space and at any time of year. It is native to northern Argentina and also is known by its older name: *Tephrocactus articulatus var. papyracanthus*. It has two common names: Paper Spine Cactus and Pinecone Cactus. It is a segmented, bushy succulent growing slowly up to about 17 inches tall. It may take two years to attain its mature stage; the one on display here is 9½ years old.



The pine-cone-shaped segments are common to the species and are loosely attached to each other, resulting in them being easy to detach, so easy that simply transporting a plant can result in segments detaching. I also have documented squirrels and birds breaking segments off my plants, which is why my plant, 9½ years old, looks quite small for its age. Detached segments will root without any special requirements.

The tubercles are arranged spirally and tipped with small, almost round, woolly areoles that bear red to purplish black glochids and sometimes 1 to 4 flattened spines, which are flexible and papery. Even though one is inclined to touch the papery spines, the glochids are like most cacti plants in that they can be quite painful, so it is best to be careful, especially when holding and planting segments.

This plant appreciates both being in full sun and timely watering. It prefers free-draining soil that keeps it moist all the time; watering affects the life span of a healthy plant, as well as its propensity to flower. *Tephrocactus articulatus* is hardy to about 16°F.

Flowers are either white or yellow, usually with some green at the center. The flowers make a nice contrast to the earth-tone colors of the plant. Flowers open at twilight and close shortly after dawn. Although flowering is difficult to achieve, a regular watering routine will provide visible results.







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).



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

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

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 Show & Sale Chair & Sales – Brita Miller
Show & Presentations - Charlyne Barad Plant Donations - Lorie Johansen, Sherman Blench
Membership – Richard Miller membership@palomarcactus.org
Publicity (print) -Tom McCarter (social media) - 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
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
Program Coordinator, Plant Auction – Robert Kopfstein
Meeting Sales Cashiers – Teri Shusterman, Liz Rosycki
Meeting A/V – Ken Brown
Exchange Table – Brian Magone Benefit Drawing – Martina Reed
Visitor & New Member Ambassadors – Lorie Johansen, Brita Miller
Name Badge Drawing plants - Julie Kort
Additional Meeting Volunteers – Stacy Day, Lottie Foster, Laura Fish, Ellissa Hayward

Newsletter Team:

Charlyne Barad – Coordinator, Speaker, Club info, Meeting Recap, Brag Table Winners
Russel Ray – Plant of the Month, Library Plant of the Month, Collator & Distributor
Joan Herskowitz – Garden Brag Page
Brita Miller – Spring & Fall Show & Sale and Holiday Party Recaps, misc.
Winston Chan – Miscellaneous Pages
Wanda Mallen – Proofreader