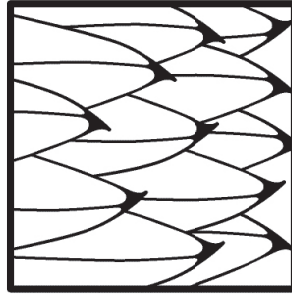


Central Coast Cactus  
& Succulent Society  
c/o Markus Mumper  
780 Merced St.  
Pismo Beach, CA 93449



# On the Dry Side

February 2011

## Inside this issue: CCCSS January Meeting Recap

- Upcoming Speakers Darwin in the Garden, as presented by **Dr. Bob Field**, was the title of our talk last month. Bob had four main points:
    - Rene & Patty Caro
  - Plants of the Month
    - *Dioscorea*
    - *Copiapoa*
  - CCCSS Show & Sale
    - May 28 - 29
  - CSSA Convention
    - April 24 - 29
- First, like remote volcanic islands, the geographical isolation of Mediterranean climates on five continents provides multiple opportunities for plants to evolve specialized adaptations to survive extended dry seasons, years of drought and occasionally devastating wildfires.
- Second, the co-evolution of plants and animals influences their anatomy and physiology, particularly as plants reward and repel animals and other life forms.
- Third, plant cells fix inorganic carbon from the atmosphere, but cannot fix other key nutrients from atmospheric nitrogen and phosphate minerals. This is resolved by their evolutionary history of symbiotic relationships with fungus and bacteria.
- Fourth, the co-evolution of the Earth and its biosphere can explain the persistence of liquid oceans, the composition of the atmosphere, and the diversity, abundance and distribution of the six kingdoms of life.
- Bob included succulents in his talk. Co-evolution is the word used to describe different families or genera evolving similar traits. Succulents, and true cacti, in North and South America can resemble plants from Africa and other areas because they all evolved in climates with extended dry seasons. Thus, a *Euphorbia* can resemble a *Ferocactus* but they are far different genetically:
- The *Ferocacti* are true cacti while the *Euphorbia* are solely succulents, but both genuses use similar strategies to survive, all because of co-evolution.
- Thanks again to Bob, and his wife Joan, for a pleasant and informative program.

### Rene & Patty Caro of the Caro Desert Nursery

Rene and Patty Caro, of the Caro Desert Nursery, have been photographing plants in their natural habitat, as well as at their home, for about twelve years. Some of their photographs have won 'Best in Show' and 'Best in Category' in both California and Colorado.

"Cacti and other succulents were the original inspiration for our photography. There is nothing quite like seeing these great plants in their own habitat to inspire everything from staging to growing techniques" says Patty.

Their talk this month will be centered around photography techniques for personal collections of cacti and their flowers. Rene and Patty have developed a few props which they use to get great photos of their own collection and they will share these with members. Rene will also explain about the other photography equipment he uses and why.

Now that they have a personal collection and many nursery plants to choose from there are always wonderful flowers or amazing spine formations to photograph - we'll see some of their results!

Rene and Patty also have an extensive and healthy collection of plants for sale. Their phone number is 661 456-0787 and the address is 9607 E. Avenue S12, Littlerock, CA 93543. If anyone needs anything let them know.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO PAY YOUR ANNUAL CCCSS MEMBERSHIP DUES.**

**YOUR DUES PAY FOR THE LIBRARY MEETING ROOM RENTAL, NEWSLETTER, AND ALLOW US TO SHARE OUR HOBBY WITH OUR FELLOW MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.**

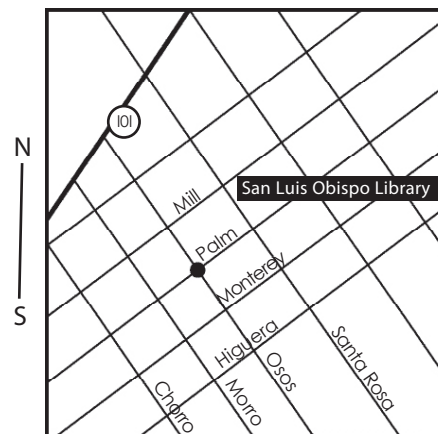
**\$10 Student \$15 Individual \$20 Family \$35 Business**

## NEXT meeting:

Sun, Feb. 13'th at 2:00 pm

San Luis Obispo Public Library

995 Palm Street  
San Luis Obispo

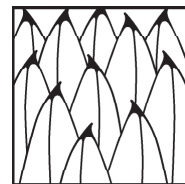


### NEWS FROM THE JANUARY BOARD MEETING:

- All members who renew by the February meeting will receive a succulent courtesy of the CCCSS.
- Only paid members may advertise in the CCCSS newsletter. Board approval is required.
- The CCCSS will investigate membership in the California Garden Club (CGA) to achieve legal non-profit status.
- Nick Wilkinson will propose new club t-shirts.

### BOARD—MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be held on February 13'th right after our General Meeting. As always all members are welcome.



Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society

e-mail: [markusmumper@gmail.com](mailto:markusmumper@gmail.com)

All submissions to the CCCSS newsletter must be submitted two weeks prior to the monthly meeting.

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Gene Schroeder 929-2161	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> Nick Wilkinson 528-8880	<b>SECRETARY</b> Jan Moon 927-1310	<b>CCSS AFFILIATE</b> Rob Skillin 473-0788	<b>TREASURER</b> Edie Price 489-8491
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A one time free newsletter will be mailed out to those who sign in at the monthly meetings. After this dues must be paid in order to start a subscription.

**You Must See These DVDs!**  
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[roweclayworks@att.net](mailto:roweclayworks@att.net)

**The  
 Clayworks**

**The CCCSS 2011 Show & Sale  
 Planning Committee**

The Show & Sale Planning Committee is responsible for ensuring that all aspects of our upcoming S&S have been thought out and to have a plan in place which will lead to success.

Volunteers will be accepted at this month's meeting, or contact Rob Skillin at 709-3033.

A request for volunteers to help with the setup, take down and staffing of the S&S will be made in April and May.

**CSSA Corner**

The biennial Convention of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America is coming up fast. Early registration allows for a \$100 discount but must be made by February 15, 2011 to qualify. Don't miss the best presenters anywhere and the social fun of a World-Wide C&S gathering. There will be field trips, plant workshops, a Judges Workshop, Newsletter Editors meeting, Affiliates meeting among all of the other activities. Remember, San Diego, April 24-29, 2011.

The New Year is here and it is time to renew subscriptions to the CSSA Journal. Do it soon so as not to miss the first issue of 2011.

**Upcoming Events**

**February 12**  
**San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Winter Show and Sale**  
 Balboa Park Visitors Center  
 1549 El Prado, Room 101, San Diego, CA. 858-382-1797

**April 8 - 9**  
**South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**  
 South Coast Botanic Gardens  
 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA. 310-832-2262

**April 24 - 29**  
**Cactus and Succulent Society of America's 34th Biennial Convention**  
 Mission Valley Marriot Hotel  
 8757 Rio San Diego Drive, San Diego, CA. [www.cssainc.org](http://www.cssainc.org)

**May 1**  
**South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale**  
 South Coast Botanical Gardens - 9:00am to 4:00pm  
 26300 Crenshaw Boulevard, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA. 310-833-6823

**May 9 - 10**  
**Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society 51st Annual Show & Sale**  
 Sacramento Garden and Art Center  
 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento CA. 530-753-7011 [nedmar@aol.com](mailto:nedmar@aol.com)

**May 20 - 21, 2011**  
**Gates Cactus & Succulent Society's 36th Show & Sale**  
 Jurupa Mountain Cultural Center - 9:00am - 4:00pm  
 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA. 909-360-8802.

**May 28 - 29**  
**Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Annual Show & Sale**  
 Ludwick Center - 10:00am to 4:00pm  
 864 Santa Rosa San Luis Obispo, CA 805-237-2054

**Hospitality News**

Sign up to bring refreshments and get a 4 inch plant!! You must sign the **Hospitality Sign-Up sheet** and bring refreshments to get a plant. We need refreshments for each monthly meeting and we need to know who is bringing them. Thanks to everyone who has been contributing to the refreshment fund; donations can be made at the refreshment table.

~Pat

## **Dioscorea** L. (Greek - Dioscorides, physician and botanist)

*Dioscorea* is a genus of over 600 species of flowering plants in the family Dioscoreaceae, native throughout the tropical and warm temperate regions of the world. The vast majority of the species are tropical, with only a few species extending into temperate climates.

They are tuberous herbaceous perennial lianas (long-stemmed woody vines that climb up to sunlight using other plants, usually, as support), growing to five to forty feet tall or more. The leaves are spirally arranged, mostly broad and heart-shaped. The flowers are individually inconspicuous, greenish-yellow, with six petals; they are mostly dioecious (with separate male and female plants) though a few species are monoecious (male and female flowers on the same plant). The fruit is a capsule in most species, a soft berry in a few species.

Several species, known as yams, are important agricultural crops in tropical regions. Many of these are toxic when fresh but can be detoxified and eaten and are particularly important in parts of Africa, Asia and Oceania

Of particular interest to collectors is *Dioscorea elephantipes* (Elephant's Foot or Hottentot Bread), native to southwest South Africa including the Cape of Good Hope. This plant is a Winter grower, avoid too much sun for the perennial tuber or it will 'burn'.

It takes the name Elephant's Foot from the appearance of its large tuberous stem which grows very slowly but often reaches a considerable size, often more than nine feet in circumference with a height of nearly three feet above ground. It is rich in starch, hence the name Hottentot bread, and is covered on the outside with thick, hard, corky plates. It develops slender, leafy, climbing shoots which die back each season.



## **Copiapoa** B. & R. (after the town of Copiapoa, Chile)

*Copiapoa* is a favorite genus among many cactus growers. While not known for any particular characteristics, the species in *Copiapoa* exhibit a wide degree of "variation on a theme". In common with each other, *Copiapoa* species are globose or globose-cylindrical plants that have well-defined ribs and a woolly apex which gives rise to nearly all yellow flowers. These flowers are funnel shaped, mostly between 1 and 2 inches in diameter and are quite similar from one plant to the next.

In contrast, the spines may be long and fierce or mostly absent. The roots may be fibrous or huge tubers that are larger than the portions above ground. Some plants are small individuals and many form clumps - some imposing mounds of several feet across with hundreds of stems. Coloration is also a variable even with in the same species from glaucous blue-green, to deep green to brown. In this way, it is easy to identify a given plant as one belonging in the genus *Copiapoa*, but it is conversely difficult to then decide to which species it belongs.

As previously stated, *Copiapoa* is widely popular in cultivation. In the wild the genus is restricted to Northern Chile. There they are found primarily in the Atacama desert where annual rainfall is barely measurable. The plants in habitat get their moisture from coastal fogs. Images from this habitat often reveal vast barren areas where *Copiapoa* plants or clumps march across the void along with almost no other vegetation. Despite the extreme and specific conditions in habitat, *Copiapoa* as a whole are surprisingly easy in cultivation. From seed sowing to the care of mature plants, this genus is very forgiving. While staying manageable in size, *Copiapoa* in cultivation will flower from a young age and reliably year after year.

