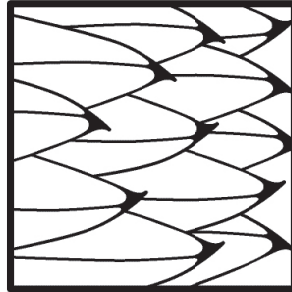


On the Dry Side

September, 2011



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

Inside this issue: CCCSS August Meeting Recap

- Upcoming Speakers
Nick Wilkison
Rob Skillin
Charles Spotts
Markus Mumper

To all club members – please help the future of our club and think about joining our board. We badly need a new newsletter editor and secretary.

Everyone should have received information on the upcoming field trip to San Juan Bautista Show and Sale on September 17th. The last chance to sign up will be at our next meeting

- Plants of the Month
Ornithophilic Cacti

Our August presenter was Hope Merkle from Los Osos Valley Nursery. Her parents have owned the nursery for 35 years, she virtually grew up at the nursery. She did a wonderful hands-on presentation on how to make succulent wreaths. Hope says you can make your own wreath for approximately \$20.00. You will need the following: a frame, chicken wire, gloves, sphagnum moss, floral wrapping wire, tool for poking holes through wreath (pencil, screwdriver) soil and, of course, succulent cuttings. She suggests using sheet moss, it's more expensive but it's easier to work with.

Using regular potting mix instead of cactus mix is recommended for this project. You can add a polymer to your soil or cornstarch to help retain moisture. Succulents can take extra moisture, especially in wreaths, as the plants are growing in a small area with a small amount of soil, so it can dry up quick

It will take two to three weeks for the cuttings to root. It's best to leave the wreath flat until cuttings are rooted. Once the wreath is rooted, you can mount it on a wall or lay it down as a centerpiece. You can hose it down once or twice a week or you can soak it in a bucket of water. Hope fertilizes her wreaths three times a year with fish emulsion. Organic fertilizers may take longer to absorb but are much better for plants according to Hope, the salts in synthetic fertilizers can be horrible for soil.

Hope was kind enough to donate the demonstration wreath she made for our raffle. It's a beauty. She also has wreath-making videos and supplies at her parent's nursery and was again kind enough to offer all CCCSS club members 10% off on any purchase.

Thanks Hope for your great demo and valuable information you shared with us.
~Jan Moon

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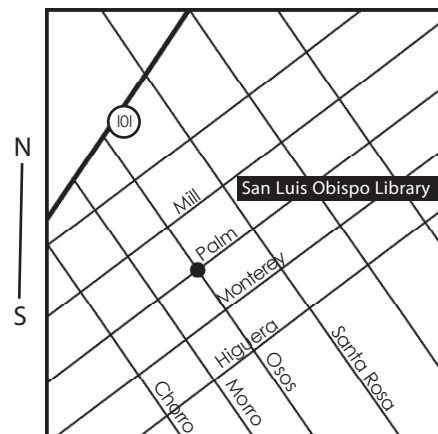
Speaker of the Month _____

We will have a panel discussion about various aspects of cacti and other succulent culture. Bring your questions about sun, watering, fertilizing, pests or anything else you want to know so that you can raise the most beautiful plants possible. The panel will consist of Rob Skillin, Gene Schroeder, Markus Mumper and Nick Wilkinson.

The sales tables will be open to any member wanting to sell plants. Our first time for a member sale! Please label your plants including prices.



NEXT meeting:



Sun, Sep. 11'th at
2:00 pm

San Luis Obispo
Public Library

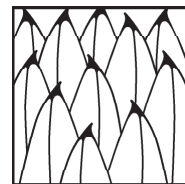
995 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo

NEWS FROM THE AUGUST BOARD MEETING:

- Maggie Wagner and Jan Moon will take over Library duties. Jeanne & Martin will help in the transition.
- The CCCSS re-sale permit is in process so that we can have our own control of re-sale taxes for our club.
- Still looking for an assistant secretary and newsletter editor. Anyone interested please contact Markus Mumper or Jan Moon.
- Jim Harlow suggested that the club may adopt a public space to cultivate and maintain in SLO County.

BOARD—MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be held on September 11 right after our General Meeting, as always all members are welcome.



Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society

e-mail: markusmumper@gmail.com

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

PRESIDENT Gene Schroeder 929-2161	VICE PRESIDENT Nick Wilkinson 528-8880	SECRETARY Jan Moon 927-1310	CSSA AFFILIATE Rob Skillin 473-0788	TREASURER Edie Price 489-8491
EDITOR Markus Mumper 773-1499	ASST. EDITOR Nick Wilkinson 528-8880	PUBLICITY Wayne Mills 481-3495	LIBRARIANS Jan Moon 927-1310 Maggie Wagner 773-1499	HOSPITALITY Pat Gilson 481-5596 Ann Byrne 934-0492

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.



Oreocereus ritteri in habitat

Upcoming Events

September 17 - 18

Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale

Jardines de San Juan: 9:00am - 5:00pm, 9:00am - 3:30pm

115 Third St., San Juan Bautista, CA

September 25

Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Plant Auction

Friends of Rancho San Pedro: 12:00pm start

18127 South Alameda St., Rancho Dominguez, CA

November 8 - 9

San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale

Los Angeles County Arboretum: 9:00am - 5:00pm

301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA

December 2 - 3

Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society Winter Show & Sale

Anaheim United Methodist Church: 12:00pm - 7:00pm, 9:00am - 5:00pm

1000 S. State College Blvd., Anaheim, CA

March 30 - April 2, 2012

Cactus & Succulent Soc. of Australia and the Ballarat Cactus & Succulent Soc.

Hoppers Crossing, Victoria, Australia

www.cssaustralia.org.au

May 5 - 6, 2012

Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale

Sacramento Garden and Arts Center

3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95816

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 & Ann

Cacti with Flowers Especially Adapted to Hummingbird Pollination (Ornithophily)-- the Cleistocactus-Oreocereus Floral Syndrome.

In ornithophilic cacti the flowers consist of a long tube, often 2 - 3 inches long or more, usually brightly colored, in which the petals do not curve back but remain closed, or nearly so. This type of flower is especially suited to hummingbird pollination. In some cases the flower does not open at all and fertilization occurs within the tube; this is called cleistogamy. In other cases the flower may open just enough for the stamens to protrude, or sometimes enough to produce a very narrow funnel.

Three cactus genera, unrelated, but with similar ornithophilic floral morphology are considered this month – **Cleistocactus**, **Oreocereus**, and **Denmoza**.

Oreocereus: (greek oros = mountain). Mostly very hairy columnar cacti with ten to twenty five ribs. Branching from the base, reaching heights of several feet. This group consists of eleven, mostly columnar, shaped species found in high altitudes from Peru to Bolivia and Argentina. These attractive cacti are excellent for growing in containers outside and inside and for using as landscape plants. The stems are covered in long, white, hair-like spines (which becomes more dense in strong light) to protect them from the mountain cold and hot sun. Hidden in this white down are long, needle-like spines, which may be white, red or straw-colored. These cacti may form prostrate clusters or erect plants over ten feet high. **O. celsianus** (Old Man of the Mountains) forms stout, woolly stems that branch with age. A similar species is **O. trollii** (Old Man of the Andes). They have somewhat shorter stems and are covered in red or straw-colored spines. **O. pseudofossulatus** has taller and thinner stems than most *Oreocereus*. They are lightly covered with wool and are armed with red or yellow spines. It branches readily and forms a lax bush. This variety can grow up to nine feet high with a spread of three feet. This species also blooms sooner than the others, producing violet-red flowers after ten to fifteen years. **O. doelzianus** is an attractive species that forms clumps about three feet high and three inches in diameter. The bright green stems are covered with downy white areoles from which grow sharp, reddish-brown to yellowish-brown spines.

The tubular-shaped flowers of *Oreocereus* are produced after several years and are about four inches long and one inch or less across. The flowers are borne at the end of the stems on ordinary areoles or in a *pseudocephalium*. Flowers are a long tube, zygomorphic (that is, bilaterally symmetrical), scaly and hairy outside, pink to purple. The petals open only slightly, or not at all.

Oreocereus, as with most Andean cacti, prefer strong sunshine and a marked difference between day and night temperature (as befits the altitude of their habitat in the Andes as high as 12,000 feet or more). They tolerate light frost but should have daytime temps above 60°. The soil should not include too much humus to prevent the plants from becoming flabby, some aerial humidity is beneficial. My plants in the ground grow in full sun but I shade my potted plants lightly during the 100° degree, low humidity days in the North County. In the winter my plants have been subjected to temperatures in the low 20°s without any ill effects. Generally, they should be repotted every other year or so in order to provide fresh soil. However, this doesn't necessarily mean they'll need larger pots. After repotting, do not water for a week or more.

Cleistocactus: (from the greek *cleisto* = closed; the name refers the tendency of the flowers to remain closed when mature). Slim columnar plants, branching from the base with many more or less rounded ribs and fine, dense spines. The flowering zone is sometimes very bristly or there may be a *pseudocephalium*. The flowers project laterally toward the end of the stems and have a narrow tube with dense scales, bristles or wool and short inner petals which do not curve back; in many species the flowers do not open at all and pollination occurs within the closed flower (*cleistogamy*). They are ideal for pollination by hummingbirds with their brilliant red, yellow, or green coloring. They are native from the Andes foothills of Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, and in Paraguay and Uruguay. They prefer rich soil and bright warm conditions. They also like higher levels of atmospheric humidity and benefit from frequent misting in the spring and summer.

Densely spined species, e.g. **C. straussii** and **C. brookei**, show a dormant period in July and August and grow more vigorously in autumn, less in the spring. Upland species from Bolivia, e.g. **C. candelilla**, **C. ritteri**, **C. smaragdiflorus**, **C. straussii**, can be kept completely dry in the winter and will tolerate mild frosts. Lowland species, e.g. **C. baumannii**, should not be allowed to dry out completely in the winter.

The Genus *Cleistocactus* has been expanded to include **Hildewintera** (or **Winteria**) (named for Hilde Winter, the sister of the cactus collector Friedrich Ritter.), a plant most often exhibited as a crest or in a hanging basket, and several species of **Borzicactus**. *Hildewintera* is native to Bolivia. Its only species is **H. aureispina**, (now **Cleistocactus winteri**), with pendant stems about an inch in diameter and up to four feet long covered with bright golden yellow spines. Many species formerly in the Genus *Borzicactus* and now considered to be included in *Cleistocactus* include **C. acanthurus**, **C. fieldianus**, and **C. hoffmannii**.

Denmoza: This genus is included here because the flowers share the same morphology with *Oreocereus* and *Cleistocactus*. The name is an anagram of Mendoza, a province of Argentina. The most current taxonomic system recognizes only one species, **D. rhodacantha**, which includes the previously recognized species **D. erythrocephala**. *Denmoza* is a globose to short columnar cactus native to the Andes foothills of Argentina. It resembles a barrel cactus; its body is about six inches to one foot wide and up to two feet tall with twenty to thirty ribs and numerous sturdy red spines up to four inches long. Flowers, which arise from special hairy areoles near the apex, are red, tubular, and remain closed at maturity with the stamens projecting. Culture is like that for *Oreocereus*. ~Charles Spotts



Another *Cleistocactus*, *C. ferrugineus*, in habitat and in flower