

Espinas y Flores

*Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society
an affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America*

Volume 51, Number 11

November 2016



SDCSS General Meeting: Saturday November 12th, 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Program: Hechtias from Oaxaca and Puebla, Mexico, by Andy Siekkinen

Feature of the Month: Water Collection by Don Hunt

Pre-Meeting Workshop 11:00 am: "Soil basics for Succulent Plants" by Peter W.

New Member Orientation, 12:30 pm: Hosted by Pat and Jay

Club Annual Holiday Party is on December 10th

SDCSS Winter Show and Sale coming, February 11th

See inside for more details on these and other events!

San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society

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 Webmaster: Paul Maker
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Contact SDCSS

Website: <http://www.sdcss.net>
 Membership: membership@sdcss.net
 Newsletter Editor: newsletter@sdcss.net

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Classifieds

Ad Circulation

Espinas y Flores is circulated among approximately 720 SDCSS members online and in print. It is also made available and archived permanently, for the general public's viewing. If you would like to place an ad, please contact Sue at: newsletter@sdcss.net

On the Cover:

Hechtia tenuacan by Andy Siekkinen



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Anyone interested in placing an ad may contact the SDCSS Newsletter Editor at: newsletter@sdcss.net.

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President's Message



A sincere thanks to our speakers last month! Thank you Stan Yalof for the talk about your Sagua-ro over the years, and thank you Guillermo Rivera for a floral update on Southern Africa. I heard both were very entertaining and informative. Wish I could have been there!

Our next speaker is Andy Siekkinen presenting a program on the succulent and sometimes thorny bromeliad relatives, most notably the Hechtias. He has been researching bromeliads for several years now. He has focused on the complex and confusing Hechtia genus and in addition to showing us the beauty of these plants, he will give us an update on his research into the DNA genetics and what has been revealed in the gene sequencing of this relatively unknown and varied genus. I hope to see you on November 12th!

Our plant of the month program is going to be Don Hunt discussing conserving water by catching it. Nothing better than rain water for your plants especially ones that are salt sensitive.

Also, Peter Walkowiak will conduct a soil workshop on what materials to use for which plants and how he comes up with the best mix for his show winners. This is held pre meeting so please come early for this. And thank you Peter for doing this!

I am looking forward to the Holiday gathering ~ December 10th. It looks like it's going to be another great one! We will have lots of great unusual gift plants and pots (at least one for each attending member!), good food, and great conversations for certain, and some spirits if you are so inclined. Much planning and still more to do, but details to come.

Start thinking about protecting your Cactus from excess water. As a general statement most do not like cold conditions combined with wet. If they are cold and dry, they usually do better. This is of course, assuming we get any rain this winter ~ if winter does in fact still happen here! Best to you all and see you on the 12th! ~ Kelly G

MEMBER PHOTOS

Send Photos!

Send your favorite cactus and succulent photos for possible appearance in the next issue of Espinas y Flores. Send to: newsletter@sdcss.net



Micranthocereus estevesii
Collette Parr

Stapelia hirsute
Collette Parr



Mammillaria pettersonii
Sue Thomas



Echeveria cante
Tina Zucker



Oreocereus trolii spines
Collette Parr

November Program

Hechtias from Oaxaca and Puebla, Mexico

Presented by Andy Siekkinen



The genus *Hechtia* is a succulent genus in the bromeliad family and is found in Mexico and surrounding regions. It has long been understudied, and frankly ignored, but this past decade has seen a burst of interest that continues to reveal more interesting species. In the last 8 years, the genus has grown by around 50%, and with Andy's new discoveries it will easily grow by that much more in the coming years. In cultivation, *Hechtia* are usually thought of the big ugly brother of *Dyckia* and *Deuterocohnia*, but with new species being cultivated and the first serious hybridization programs started, we will soon see many new gems that can be added to our collections and xeric gardens.

This talk will provide some background of the genus relative to the rest of the family (they are actually only distantly related to the fellow succulent genera from South America, *Dyckia* and *Deuterocohnia*), and cover the basic biology of the genus - including a quick look at the evolutionary relationships within the genus that were partially funded by a SDCSS grant. We will then tour the varied habitats, taking a closer look at many species, including some recently published and yet-undescribed plants. We can learn a lot about proper cultivation of these plants by looking at the habitats, and thinking about how to maximize their potential. In Southern California, and San Diego in particular, we are spoiled, as



our climate is ideal for these tough, drought-adapted plants.

The program will wrap up with examples of new hybrids that are in development,

and how to grow these plants in our area.

Andy Siekkinen is a graduate student at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden/Claremont Graduate University, studying the systematics (taxonomy, anatomy, biology, and evolutionary relationships) of the genus *Hechtia*, as well as other bromeliads. He began exploring Mexico and studying the genus 7 years ago as the recession provided strong incentive to leave his previous life as a nanoparticle chemist. During that time he offered "Botanical and Cultural Adventures" tours to Mexico for small groups with his company Eagle Eye Adventures, which is currently on hiatus during his graduate studies.



Water Collection by Don Hunt

Everyone who has ever cleaned a bathroom knows the water in San Diego is very hard and leaves lots of residue. Hard water is water that has high mineral content (in contrast with "soft water"). Hard water is formed when water percolates through deposits of limestone and chalk which are largely made up of calcium and magnesium carbonates. When the water evaporates, it leaves these carbonates behind as a film that will build. I've never seen a study on the advantages or disadvantages of hard water on plants directly. I would expect it to be negative, as you are adding a buildup of minerals every time you water. I do know that it can clog the drainage, especially if you use some sort of screen over the drain hole. Additionally, the general wisdom is that cactus and succulents appreciate an acidified water. It is more difficult to acidify hard water and the carbonates will cause the water to neutralize whatever acid you use in time. My principal reason for using rainwater exclusively is that the mineral deposits that are left on the pot rim are simply not acceptable to me. I do think it's worthwhile even if you don't water with rainwater exclusively, to flush the soil occasionally. Winter growers can be left out directly (usually), but we don't want our summer growers wet and cold, so that calls for a plan.

Now is the time to get ready for capturing, storing and using rainwater. The main consideration is how much room you have for storage. You've probably seen the shipping totes for fluids. They hold 275 gallons and are about 4ft by 4 ft. They are the cheapest way of storing a lot of water that I know of. Bigger cisterns and 55 gallon barrels are available. It's important to have storage that has a tight lid to prevent mosquitos.

Here's how I do my rainwater capture. I put a large clean trash can that I keep for this purpose directly under the down spout on the house. The water coming off the roof will be cleaner as the rainy season progresses, but I don't much care about some sediment. It will settle out in the storage and will be flushed when the tank is emptied. I have a pump with a float switch from Harbor Freight in the tank with a hose running to whatever storage tank I'm filling. I don't want the collection can to overflow and dump water right next to the house. It's amazing to me how little rainfall results in such a lot of capture. I have gotten my yearly 1,000 gallons on 4" of rain with 2 collection points. Our normal rainfall is closer to 11", so you can see you won't need more than one collection point.

California has financial incentives (rebates) for buying rainwater collection and storage barrels. Check it out at: <http://www.socalwatersmart.com/>

My source for water storage is <https://sddrums.com>
They are located in Lemon Grove.

They have both new and recycled barrels and totes: <http://www.harborfreight.com/34-hp-stainless-steel-submersible-dirty-water-pump-with-tethered-float-2866-gph-69299.html>



This is the pump I use.

SDCSS Proposed changes to Bylaws - Retraction

In the October issue of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society newsletter Espinas y Flores, a summary of proposed changes to the Club's bylaws was presented in writing to the membership. Additionally, these changes were announced to attendees of the October General Meeting. These proposals were presented prematurely, as the Board had not finalized the exact wording, and are hereby retracted. The SDCSS Board of Directors will revisit this in the near future and present the membership with the final versions.

Upcoming Events

The next SDCSS General Meeting - November 12th

The next SDCSS General Meeting will be held on Saturday, November 12th, 1:00 - 4:00 pm, in Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, Room 101.

Pre-Meeting Workshop - 11:00 am, "Soil Basics for Succulent Plants" by Peter Walkowiak (see below)

New Member Orientation - 12:30 pm, guided by Pat and Jay

Brag Table - **Bring Your Faux Cactus & Succulents!** Entries must be in place by 12:30

Soil Basics for Succulent Plants By Peter Walkowiak, B.S. Horticulture, PW Plants

In this workshop, all aspects of soil will be discussed. Without a quality soil, the foundation of successful growing, it is difficult to get good, consistent results. A good soil should provide fast drainage, have good water and nutrient retention, and be long lasting. I will demonstrate how the soil ingredients are mixed.

Bring a plant to transplant, along with a pot. I will use your plants for the demonstration. Please don't bring anything larger than a 6" size pot. There may be extra soil after the workshop so bring an empty 6 inch pot to take some home.

Soil and Fertilizer for Succulents

There are three ingredients for my soil mix. You can substitute other materials and those will be listed below. There are three materials to avoid, peat moss, sand and kor. Both peat moss and kor (coconut husk) are not composted and when they do it turns to muck. Sand compacts and does not dry out or allow good air penetration.

Soil

60% Perlite #3, substitute pumice; this should be completely wetted and mix, do not remove fines unless excessive.

20% Compost, substitute good potting soil, I get my compost from the green recycling at the local dump and let age for a month minimum.

20% DG (decomposed granite); use 1/8 screen to remove gravel from fines. Gravel is for top dressing and fines for the soil mix.

Mix DG and compost together. Add this to the WET perlite and mix till blended and no white is showing from perlite. Soil is ready to use. Always use moist soil and never water newly transplanted succulents.

Fertilizer

0-50-30 Grow More water soluble fertilizer

15.5-0-0 Calcium Nitrate, water soluble form

White vinegar, 2 tablespoons per gallon, PH of 6.0 to 6.5

November Meeting Brag Table Faux Cactus and Succulents

The Brag Table at the November meeting will be full of Faux (fake) plants made by members. This is a chance to get creative and develop plants that are fun and a bit twisted, not unlike the real ones. An example would be Oreocereus made of Oreo cookies. In the past we've had plants made from pipe cleaners, Legos, origami, blown glass, balloons and just about anything you can imagine. Look around for interesting elements, start imagining, and knock our socks off!

Here are the Rules:

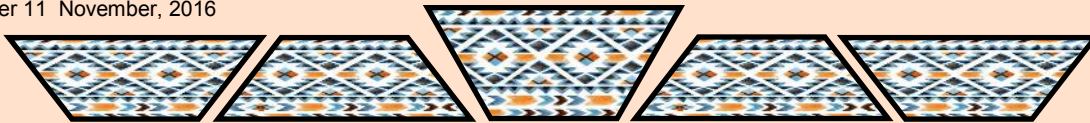
1. No obvious plant material can be used
2. "Plants" should be staged
3. Plant name must be Latin (have fun with this!).
For example, if you use Q-tips, you might want to call your plant "Spinocereus Qtipii"
4. The more uncommon the materials, the better!
5. Artistic license is encouraged

Please participate!

The more plants we have,
the better.
Have fun with it!!



Faux plant from 2015
Dustmopia erectum
var. softspinus
By Pat Bryan



News from the Safari Park's Old World Garden

It was hot in the Old World Garden this summer. With the help of the antiquated irrigation system and the strength of more volunteers, the plants were well watered. While irrigation sprayers cover ¼ of the garden, a lot of time-consuming hand watering was required. One of our volunteers built portable sprayer stands that attach to the hand-held hoses for easy spot irrigation, thereby freeing volunteers to attend to other tasks.

The Horticulture Department at the Safari Park recently cranked out 100+ plant name accession tags. So, a recent volunteer project was to place the name tags in the ground next to the correct plant. It was a great way to learn a little Latin!



The *Stapelia giganteas* are blooming in the garden-see photo below. Some adeniums and pachypodiums continue to bloom as well. Meanwhile, the leaves of many of the aloe species have turned end-of-summer red.

A huge thank you to those folks who have donated plants to the



garden this summer, including the Reisers from Cal Cactus in Fallbrook, who donated approximately 50 *Aloe vaombe*, 30 *Aloe ferox*, and 59 *A. thraskii* specimens. These plants will be added to the Old World Garden as well as to the Zoo grounds and other areas of the Safari Park. Sale plant donations also came from Jim DeForest and Chris

Miller recently. Finally, clippings and plants donated by Kelly Griffin are rooted and healthy and are starting to be added to the garden.

Two new volunteers have joined the group in the past few months, and we are looking for more. One of the perks of being a volunteer for the Safari Park is an occasional free balloon ride! If you have plants to donate or if you are interested in becoming a volunteer at the garden, please contact May Fong Ho at 760-233-3948 or mayfongho@yahoo.com.

Photos by Susan LaFreniere, used with permission of the San Diego Zoo Safari Park

We Want YOU!

It's not too early to sign up as a Volunteer for the Winter Show and Sale

Please email us at: newsletter@sdcss.net or sign up with Susan Hopkins at the Information desk at the General Meeting



Volunteers at the 2016 Summer Sale

Coffee in the Garden at the Miller's November 19th 2016 10am - 1pm

Cooler weather is on it's way to Santee, so it is a good time to come visit us. Yes the back yard is still dirt. We'll have treats and BJs great coffee and a chance to enjoy each other's company.

I have spent the last 10 months splitting up *Gasterias* and *Haworthias*, so we will have lots for sale. November is the perfect planting time for winter growing succulents. I also have lots of small to medium sized clay pots for free.

10042 Waynecrest Lane Santee
Call 619-258-9810 if you get lost.

52 east to Mast. East on mast to Cuyamaca (left), go one block and turn right on Beck, down 6 blocks and turn left on Waynecrest Lane. Middle of the block on the left. Look for the cactus.

8 east to 67 east. Exit at Magnolia/Prospect. East on Magnolia for lots of stop lights. Left on El Nopal. Up 3 blocks, turn left onto Waynecrest Lane. Halfway down the block on the right. Look for the cactus.



Support the Anza-Borrego State Park

Deadline is November 30th, to secure matching donations...

The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is a supporter of the Anza-Borrego Foundation, the official non-profit partner of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The Foundation acquires land for conservation in and around the Park, educates the public about the Park's resources, and supports research relevant to the region. Members of SDCSS have already supported the Anza-Borrego Foundation through participation (bidding) on Auction Plants at the Summer Show. Not only will the proceeds from this auction (\$700) be donated to ABF, but SDCSS will match dollar for dollar the amount collected at the auction **PLUS all donations made by members through November 30, 2016.** There is an additional incentive to send your donation by September 30th; the Anza Borrego Foundation has a challenge grant from the Parker Foundation that will also double any amount up to \$45,000. All moneys collected will be sent to the Anza-Borrego Foundation in December, along with a list of donors.



If you wish to make a donation to help preserve the beautiful and unique Anza-Borrego State Park, please send a check payable to SDCSS, and mail to:

San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society, Attn: Anza-Borrego Donation,
P.O. Box 33181, San Diego, CA 92163-3181

You may also make a donation via the website: www.sdcss.net or present your payment to a cashier at any General Meeting through November.

The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society presents its...

2017 Winter Show and Sale

Saturday, February 11th

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Members Only shopping from 9:00 - 10:00 am

Room 101 and Adjacent Patio area

Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

FREE Event!
Open to
the Public

The Show

Unusual and Exotic Plants on Display
Highlighting Winter Growers from around the World
Novice, Intermediate, & Expert Growers

Plant and Pottery Sale

Small Plants & Specimen Plants
Landscape Plants for Arid Gardens
Beautiful Handmade Pottery



Euphorbia buruana grandicornis
by Peter Walkowiak

For additional information visit: www.sdcss.net

Holiday Party 2016

December 10th

10:30 am / Lunch at Noon

Room 101, Casa del Prado

Balboa Park



Let's get together to Celebrate the Holidays!

Food and Drink: A delicious and plentiful lunch will be served around noon. There will something for everyone! Herb Stern, "The Wine Guy" will set up the bar. In the spirit of sharing, we will also have the traditional "Potluck Dessert Table." If you have a special dessert you would like to share, please do! This is optional but always a much appreciated finish to our meal.

Gift Exchange: Another fun way of sharing is to participate in the Gift Exchange. If you and/or your guests would like to participate, bring a nice plant or plant related item (one per person please), and place it on the Gift Exchange Table. Make sure your name is on your plant! A committee will have the tough job of selecting the "Best Plant", which will then be set aside for auction. Whoever brought the Best Plant will have first choice of the remaining plants, and the owner of *that* plant selects a plant, and so on until all of the Gift Exchange items are distributed. As you can imagine, the nicer the plant YOU bring, the sooner you get to choose.

Gift Plant: The Society will continue the tradition of giving each *member* who attends this event, a gift plant. They will be distributed by lottery, during desserts. When you arrive, be sure to check in at the door to receive your ticket for the drawing. Then take some time to look over the beautiful selection of plants so you will be able to grab your favorite when your number is called. (this is a benefit of membership - no gift plants for guests).

Auction: Come prepared to bid on "show quality" plants at the annual Holiday Party Auction!! Up for bid will be bare root plants donated again this year by Western Cactus Growers, along with beautiful specimens donated by our own members. If you have 1-2 "show quality" plants you would like to donate to the auction, please contact Peter or Kelly and let them know.

Too much fun to miss! We hope to see you at the party. Please let us know you are coming by filling out the RSVP/Signup form on page 13 and send to Chris Miller.



October Brag Table



Gymnocalycium friedrichii
Antonina Lansagan
Novice Cactus
1st Place



Unidentified Cactus
Julia Chimento
Novice Cactus
2nd Place



Stapelia gigantea
Antonina Lansagan
Novice Succulent
3rd Place



Tavaresia barklyi
Christine Vargas
Novice Succulent
1st Place



Faucaria sp.
Julia Chimento
Novice Succulent
3rd Place



Gymnocalycium pflanzii
Don Israel
Intermediate Cactus
2nd Place



Haemanthus albiflos
Antonina Lansagan
Novice Succulent
3rd Place



Othonna triplinervia
Leslie Sheridan
Novice Succulent
2nd Place



Brighamia insignis
Phyllis Flechsig
Advanced Succulent
1st Place



Euphorbia species
Don Israel
Intermediate succulent
1st Place



Senecio royleyanus
Jennifer harris
Intermediate Succulent
2nd Place



Tephrocactus articulatus
Jennifer Harris
Intermediate Cactus
1st Place



Echeveria agavoides
'Maria'
Maria Becker
Intermediate Succulent
3rd Place



Ceraria namaquanum
Peter Walkowiak
Advanced succulent
3rd Place



Aloe Parvula
Jerry & Candy Garner
Intermediate Succulent
3rd Place



Othonna euphorbioides
Peter Walkowiak
Advanced Succulent
2nd Place



Dudleya hansii
Peter Walkowiak
Advanced Succulent
3rd Place

CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2016 / 2017

NOV. 5-6 San Gabriel Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale,
9am - 4pm both days, LA County Arboretum, 310 No. Baldwin, Arcadia, CA
Info: Manny Rivera (626) 780-6957 or John Matthews (661) 714-1052

DEC. 10 **SDCSS Holiday Party**

FEB. 11 SDCSS Winter Show & Sale, Casa del Prado. Balboa Park

SDCSS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Dues are \$15.00 per year per individual, and \$5.00 per year for each additional household member. The Newsletter is emailed. Mailed paper copies are available for an additional \$10 a year. Each member has all the rights and benefits of the organization. **Please fill in all blanks and PRINT CLEARLY! Thank you!**

Type of Membership (please check one): New _____ Renewal _____
 Annual Membership Dues (E-mail Newsletter): \$15.00 _____
 Add USPS delivery (Paper Newsletter): \$10.00 _____
 Annual Dues – International (Paper): \$30.00 _____
 Additional Household Member(s) each: \$ 5.00 _____
 Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Member Information: (Please PRINT to fill in ALL blanks below!)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City and State: _____ Zip + 4: _____
 Phone Number: (____) _____ Cell/FAX: (____) _____
 Email Address: _____
 Additional Household Members: _____

Do you wish to receive E-mail notifications of Club events and issues? Yes _____ No _____
 Mail this form or a copy, along with a check or money order in US Funds, payable to SDCSS to:

SDCSS Membership Dept, c/o Paul Maker
 1245 San Pablo Drive, San Marcos, CA 92078

Please print, cut, and mail the following RSVP form
 to let us know you will be attending the Holiday Party

Holiday Party RSVP and Signup

Name	Member \$20	Non-Member \$25	Amount
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
Total Amount Enclosed			\$



Please let us know you are coming!
 Send this completed form along with a check payable to SDCSS, to
 Chris Miller, 10042 Waynecrest Lane, Santee, CA 92071
You may also pay via the club website: <http://www.sdcss.net>
or by emailing Chris: C.miller@cox.net

