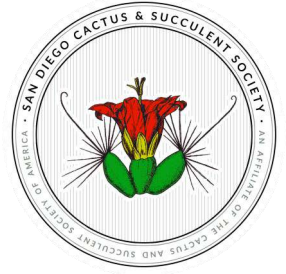
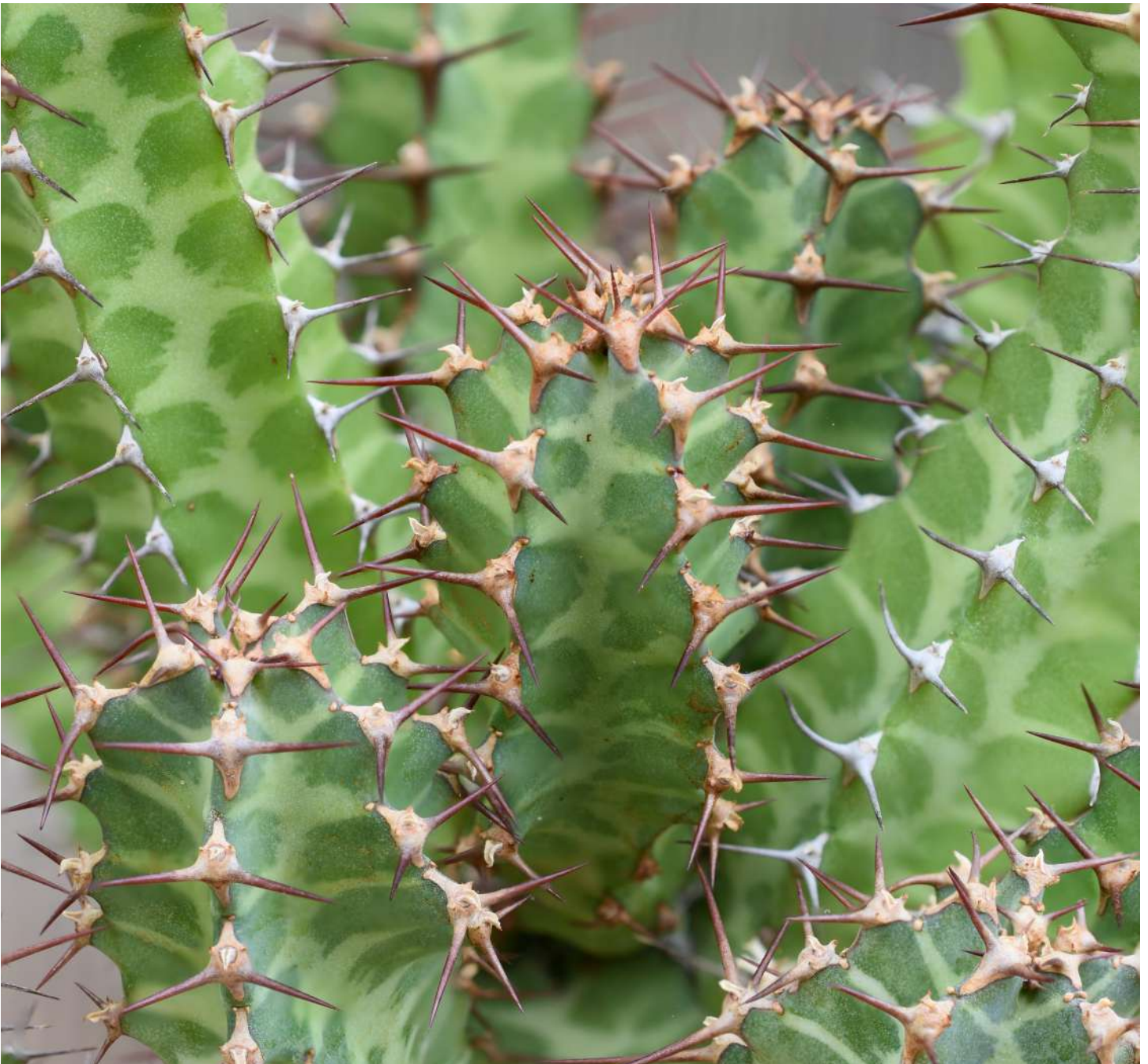


ESPINAS Y FLORES



Vol. 59, No. 03
MARCH 2024

NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
AN AFFILIATE OF THE CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA



SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA // MARCH SPEAKER
WINTER SHOW 2024 RECAP // MEMBER SECTION // ...and more



ON THE COVER

Euphorbia perangusta pattern and spines
Photo by Jared Petker

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UPCOMING SDCSS SCHEDULE

OUR UPCOMING MEETING

March 9th

FOLLOWING MEETING

April 13th

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Pam Badger
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Picnic Regalement	[open]
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Show Auction Manager	[open]
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Benefit Drawing Table	Allen Clark & Chuck Ramey
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! Someone once gave me a card that read "A gardener's work is never done." Truer words have never been spoken, and this morning was a great example. I had one task to get done today: write this message. With many pressing tasks later this week and a Friday deadline, I pledged to get it done first thing, then I went out for a quick look around the garden before the predicted rain—suddenly it was late afternoon and I was just getting started. I did get a few things done outside, including an idea for an article which I hope to also get done this afternoon. Plants are truly addictive, and I always prefer putzing around with plants to doing anything else.

I hope many of you had a chance to visit the Winter Show and Sale on the 10th of February. It was a beautiful sunny day following a week of rain! Once again, a fantastic team of volunteers came together and created a fun and successful event. There were so many truly amazing plants in the show that the judges had difficulties making choices for ribbons and trophies! **Rick Bjorklund** stepped up to organize the show with strategies he developed based on our previous years' winter show, and integrating our updated plant classifications put together by **Dean Karras** and **Tina Zucker**. The result? A true showcase of the winter growing succulents of the world.

The sale was also a terrific success thanks to **Chris Miller's** admirable organizational skills and the crack team

of cashiers, many of whom did not seem to take a break all day as they assisted visitors and members with their purchases. Special thanks to **Ken Brown**, our treasurer and cash register master, who kept the sales area running smoothly.

We could not have a sale without the vendors! Although we had a few vendors drop out at the last minute, there was a fantastic selection of plants and pottery. I had several visitors come up to me expressing awe with the variety and quality of items available. Thank you to the vendors who worked hard in Friday's rain to make this sale possible.

An of course, the show is not possible with volunteers who set up tables, move plants, assist newbies, keep the floors swept, hold plants for visitors and shoppers, and, of course, the kitchen crew that kept everyone fed: **Sandy, Kaija, Robin, and Donna F.** Thanks to **Candy Garner, Susan Hopkins**, and their team for organizing volunteers and running the reception area, the heartbeat of the whole thing. Volunteers on the security team, organized and led by **Brian Shepard**, are always visible in their orange vests, making it feel more secure for those showing their best plants to the public and for the vendors selling their wares. Thanks to all of you who came, participated in so many ways, and made it another fantastic event.

To all of you who participated: **YOU ARE THE BEST! THANK YOU!!**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONT.

By the way: every volunteer is entitled to a "thank you" coupon to purchase items at future sales. If you did not receive one, please let me know, or come to the next meeting and collect it. Your efforts are truly valued, and this coupon is one way we can express our gratitude.

Our next meeting is coming up on **March 9, 2024** in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. It is always a good time, and we would love to see some of you new members attend! If you've never enjoyed a club meeting, we'll be following this basic schedule: there will be sales starting around 9:30am, a new member orientation at 12:30am, followed immediately by the general meeting, which begins at 1PM.

Come enjoy a Plant of the Month talk by **Jared Petker**, our webmaster, member of the Board, and fellow Euphorbia enthusiast. There will be a benefit drawing, a plant exchange, and a brand new (to us) main speaker, Ricardo Ramírez Chaparro. Get a preview of the details in this newsletter. There will be snacks at the break, and bring a treat to share if you are inclined! Members are also welcome to explore and check out books from our extensive Library. If you have a plant that is looking extra special that you would like to show off, bring it to the Brag Table for a chance to get feedback from a plant judge and win "Plant Bucks" to use at any of our great sales.

As we previously announced, SDCSS

will be hosting the **Biannual CSSA International Convention** of Succulent Plant enthusiasts in the Spring of 2025. This is a fun and exciting event, and we will definitely need volunteers to help out in many areas. **We will be holding the first organizational meeting at the March meeting at noon** before the general meeting. IF YOU HAVE SPECIAL SKILLS OR EXPERIENCE IN SUCH AN EVENT, or if you just want to find out more about ways to help out, please join us for this meeting and for more information.

Best wishes, and see you on March 9!

Pam Badger
February 20, 2024

UPCOMING GUEST SPEAKER



MARCH 09 SPEAKER
RICARDO RAMÍREZ
CHAPARRO
 “EXPLORATIONS IN
 NORTHERN MÉXICO.”

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Our speaker **Ricardo Ramírez Chaparro** hails from a small town deep in the mountains of Southern Chihuahua, México. He is an amateur naturalist who specializes in both cactus and reptiles of the region. In his free time, Ricardo enjoys traveling across the country, especially northern México, trying to find and document as many species as possible.

**ABOUT OUR SPEAKER TOPIC:**

In his talk, Ricardo will share a presentation about his naturalist explorations, with a special focus on his adventures in locating *Mammillaria luethyi* in habitat.

And: join us just before Ricardo's talk for **Jared Petker's** POM presentation on Euphorbia spines.

[SEE YOU ON MARCH 9, 2024!](#)



SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA

SPINES, 'SPINES', AND
"SPINES"!

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY JARED PETKER

One of my first introductions to the Genus *Euphorbia* was picking up a small *Euphorbia aeruginosa* (left) in a 4-inch pot. My wife and I were enamored by the chalky blue-green-toned flesh and rich burgundy-colored spines decorating each and every arm from base to tip. Looking closely, I could see the spines grouped into squads of four, with two larger spines below a set of two tinier spines, all emerging from what looked like a small shield of armor. I collected more *Euphorbia* over time, as one does of course, and realized that not all *Euphorbia* spines are the same. Some are stiff, others more flexible. Some plants have four spines per group while others two, or one! I then noticed even more *Euphorbia* with prickly and pokey parts that didn't resemble anything like *E. aeruginosa*'s spination. What a world!

It was fascinating—it *still* is fascinating.

Come meander with me. Let's try and learn more about these amazing spiny structures of *Euphorbia*, together.

SWORDS AND SHIELDS

Our spiny *Euphorbia* are sprinkled with all different kinds of spines. The most notable spiny structures have spines which are found in variably numbered groupings, emerging from a hardened armor-like base called a **spine shield**. These spines can be miniscule in length or up to several centimeters long, and are actually considered to be modified leaves!

Euphorbia rowlandii (Figure 1, next page) can be seen with groupings of paired, robust spines. Its spines are all connected at the base to a protuberance attached to the green flesh of the plant. This protuberance creates woody margins stretching up and down each shoot. These margins are the spine shields. In *E. rowlandii*, the spine shields are fused together to create one continuous and unbroken line of defense along each shoot where each pair of spines protrudes from.



Euphorbia aeruginosa

SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA

However, not all spine shields are continuous and fused together! On *E. aeruginosa* (Figure 2, below), the spine shields exist as islands instead, which are not fused together. We can denote disconnected spine shields as being discontinuous. Unlike *E. rowlandii*, *E. aeruginosa*'s spine shields and spines are less wood-like, and more jewel-toned (though *E. rowlandii*'s spines are more rubbery and less woody initially). *E. aeruginosa*'s spines do tend to stiffen more over time, however I've never seen them take on a more wood-like or hardened appearance. Maybe I just need to find a particularly old specimen, or see them in their habitat to find out!

Another plant with discontinuous spine shields is *E. triaculeata* (Figure 3, next page), a Somalian shrub with shoots around the diameter of a large thumb. The spine shields on *E. triaculeata* more tightly hug its spines compared to *E. aeruginosa*'s more elongated spine shields. If we take a closer look, we can see that *E. triaculeata* has a single large spine compared to the two larger spines seen on *E. aeruginosa*. This is curious! Why only one spine? Other Euphorbia, such *E. erigavensis*, *E. monocantha* (meaning "single-spined") and *E. actinoclada* also carry this characteristic! They're not the only ones, but are a few fun ones to check out. As seedlings, these plants are known to develop two separate main spines. Quickly after their seedling stage, the two main spines fuse into one and produce a main spine forever after. Pretty cool!

If you've been paying particularly close attention to the most recent figures, you will have also noticed that there appears to be smaller spines above the larger spines on each spine shield of

(cont'd)



Figure 1: *E. rowlandii* is a South African shrub which grows up to 2 meters tall and 2 meters wide. I think this one would like to give you a hug. Plant of Al Klein.



Figure 2: *E. aeruginosa* is a South African branching dwarf shrub. "Aeruginosa" is Latin for "verdigris" or "copper rust," as in the blue-green farina which develops on copper.

SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA



Figure 3: *E. triaculeata* is a Somalian spiny shrub with what I've seen as a white-toned green flesh, and yellow cyathia. It's not terribly common in cultivation, and I've had no luck in procuring seeds from attempts at self-pollinating it.

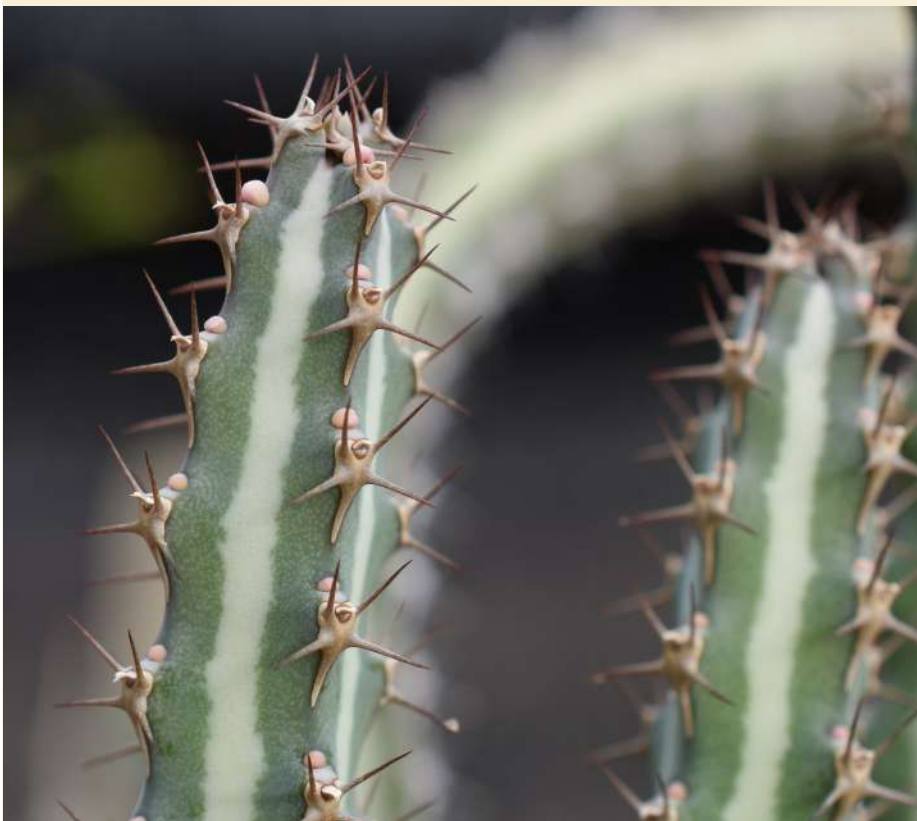


Figure 4: *E. scitula*. It's from Angola. That's really all I've got.

(cont'd from previous page)

E. triaculeata and *E. aeruginosa*. These types of smaller spines that accompany larger spines are referred to in various ways: as stipular spines, as secondary spines, and as prickles. I like using the term prickles, so we'll stick with that one. **Prickles**, when they appear, tend to straddle the leaf or leaf scar on a spine shield as clearly seen in *E. triaculeata*. This placement relative to the leaf is one reason why they are considered stipular in origin. However, not all Euphorbia with spine shields have prickles. For example, our spiny friend shown in Figure 1 of this article, *E. rowlandi*, has no prickles.

So far we've seen single- and two-spined Euphorbia, not counting prickles. But there's more! *E. scitula* (Figure 4) is a native Angolan spiny shrub with beautifully dark green and light green striped four-angled shoots. It also has discontinuous spine shields with four spines. Since each spine of its corresponding spine shield is generally of equal length, it may be more fitting to consider each spine shield as having four spines (or two spines and two stipular spines...take your pick)!

But what about spine shields that have no spines? *E. forolensis* (Figure 5, next page) is one Euphorbia from Kenya that fits the bill. *E. forolensis* has no spines, and, at best, has rudimentary prickles peeking through its discontinuous spine shields which line the shoots.

SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA

THE CURIOUS CASE OF *EUPHORBIA SCHIZACANTHA*

Last year I was lucky enough to acquire a particularly amazing and rarely-found in cultivation Euphorbia. I received it in the mail with bare and dried-up roots. I delicately packed it in perlite to re-root and waited an anxiety-riddled few months, but at the end of it, I had a *E. schizacantha* (Figure 6) full of life to adore. What is not completely unique to *E. schizacantha* is it actually has one spine *and* two spines at the same time, on the same spine! To be completely correct, *E. schizacantha* is actually similar to *E. triaculeata* pictured previously in that it has a single main spine which has fused from two spines...however, the fusion never completely finished. What we are left with is a single spine which splits at the apex into two spines. There are five known Euphorbia species with forked spines like *E. schizacantha*, including a recently described species from Somalia with reddish-brown spines, *E. buqensis* (if you find one of those, let me know)!

WHO SPINED MY PEDUNCLE?

Lucky for us all, we have even more kinds of spines to explore. *E. loricata* (Figure 7, next page) is a difficult-to-find-in-cultivation South African shrub which presents **peduncular spines**, as we'll call them. The *E. loricata* pictured has several cyathia ([Euphorbia flowering parts](#)) at the apex of the plant, sitting atop pliable burgundy colored peduncles (which are kind of like flower stalks) leading up to each cyathia. As time passes and the cyathia die off, those peduncles harden and leave us with the spines seen throughout the majority of the bottom three-quarters of the *E. loricata* pictured in Figure 7. They're quite long; over several centimeters in length. They're not delicate, but can easily snap or break off if mishandled during repotting. This feature can also be seen in, but is not exclusive to, *E. multifolia*, and many of the species in the *E. polygona* complex. I've also seen these types of spines referred to as "spines formed from modified peduncles".



Figure 5: *E. forolensis* is found on Mount Forole in Kenya. Mount Forole is just north of 1000 meters tall and sits along the Kenya-Ethiopia border. Plant of Peter Walkowiak.



Figure 6: *E. schizacantha* has a wide distribution from Kenya to Somalia and Ethiopia. It's considered difficult to cultivate, which plays into its rarity, even though it's not historically rare to find in habitat.

SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA



Figure 7: *E. loricata* can be found on the Western Cape of South Africa, typically growing up to 1 meter high. “Loricata” is Latin for “wearing a breastplate”. Plant of Peter Walkowiak.



Figure 8: *E. ferox*, meaning “fierce”, is distributed within both the Western and Eastern cape of South Africa. Mine is pictured here shortly after some winter rainfall, which it enjoyed.

Another type of spine that can occur which look eerily similar to our recently explored peduncular spines are spines which look like peduncles, minus the flowering parts. I’ve seen these types of structures referred to simply as spines, non-productive peduncles (as in peduncles without cyathia), or as sterile shoots. *Euphorbia ferox* (Figure 8) and *E. schoenlandii* (Figure 9, next page) are two perfect examples here. *E. ferox* is a South African clumping Euphorbia which exhibits reddish-purple spines. The beautiful coloration tends to fade over time, unfortunately, but do retain some of their original hue as the plant matures. *E. ferox*’s quite long “spines” riddle the entire plant, making it a bit of a pain to repot once it outgrows its current container.

E. schoenlandii is also native to South Africa, but tends to grow as one single large shoot. *E. schoenlandii*’s “spines” emerge fleshy, flexible, and green, but do turn very woody as time progresses. I’ve found that *E. schoenlandii* provides a bit more space for fingers and thumbs to get into when repotting, unlike our beautiful but pesky friend, *E. ferox*.

HORNS AND THORNS

To make sure we cover all of our bases, we’ll have to go to Madagascar and explore a few of the pointy Euphorbia found throughout the island country.

E. milii cv *antafikiensis* (Figure 10, next page) and *E. sakaraensis* (Figure 11, next page) are both Madagascan shrubs which exhibit either stipular spines or stipular thorns, depending on what you read. In either case they are described as **stipular structures**, as they emerge from and straddle either side of the leaf or leaf scar. These spines range from being quite thin and dainty to a bit thicker and conical.

E. neohumbertii (Figure 12, final page) tends to grow as a single unbranched mainstem and erect within the stone forests of Madagascar. I find *E. neohumbertii*’s spination quite enthralling to stare at as it contains groupings of what look like spines nestled within thinner bristles. These spines and bristles reach up and down the margins in between each of its sides to create very pokey lines of demarcation.

SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA



Figure 9: *E. schoenlandii* very rarely branches in its native habitat of Namaqualand, and is currently at high-risk of human caused extinction as per the IUCN. Plant of Peter Walkowiak.



Figure 10: *E. milii* cv *antafikiensis* also goes by *Euphorbia antafikiensis*. In reality however, it is not a recognized species, and antafik(i?) is not a known locale within Madagascar. Very curious.



Figure 11: *E. sakarahaensis* can be found on the floors of ancient forests within Madagascar near Sakaraha.

SPINY STRUCTURES OF THE GENUS EUPHORBIA



Figure 12: *E. neohumbertii* typically is four to five angled. The base of the leaves can become quite wide, as is seen by the corked leaf scars left over on the one pictured here.

I hope you've enjoyed this tour of Euphorbia spines of all types. Now is a great time to put down this article and explore the spines in your own greenhouse, shade-house, window-sills or gardens!

JARED PETKER

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MEMBER PHOTO SECTION: AFTER THE SHOW

The day after a show and sale is always an exciting time for me...the inspiration from all the wonderful plants in the show coupled with new plants from the sale. I am invigorated and ready to play with plants! I look at my collection and get new ideas for repotting and staging for the next show; I look at my new plants and wonder “*What was I thinking? Don’t you have enough plants?*” Of course, we all know the answer—you never have too many plants!

I was rather restrained in the recent sale, only bringing home a few, one being a new to me, *Tylecodon cacaloides* from Peter Walkowiak. On Sunday, instead of cleaning up my house from all the food prep for the show, I decided to repot this cool new plant.

Thought I would share my process for this task.

1. Search through the piles of miscellaneous pots that crowd my potting area, checking many to see how the plant looks in them.
2. Once pot is chosen I fill the bottom with broken pot rubble as it is a fairly tall pot and this allows for good drainage and keeps it light enough to carry.
3. Mix up a small batch of soil as I don’t have enough on hand after all the planting and repotting that went on before the show.
4. Put it all together.
5. I wait till it is settled in a bit before adding top dressing.

Look for this beauty next February in the Show!

PAM BADGER



Setting up plants and potting materials

Pam Badger



Potted up and ready to grow!

Pam Badger

MEMBER PHOTO SECTION: MOUNTAIN PALM SPRINGS

I sent [these photos] to Dean [Karras] because I thought these might have been *Echinocactus polycephalus*, but Dean is not sure about that. The flowering cactus is definitely *Ferocactus cylindraceus*; the others might be multi-headed *Ferocactus* (not common) or *Echinocactus polycephalus*. Dean said the shorter multi-headed ones (under 0.6 m) might be *Echinocactus polycephalus*. Mountain Palm Springs is across the S2 from the only locality of *Echinocactus polycephalus* in our area, according to iNaturalist. It is about 14 miles north of Ocotillo (a drive for sure), but it has a spectacular palm grove that you can walk through and a lovely little stream. I found out about it from the Anza Borrego Foundation newsletter.

Olga Batalov



2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



Thanks to our two judges, Kelly Griffin and Mark Fryer.

Jared Petker

THE 2024 WINTER SHOW WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS THANKS TO MEMBERS LIKE YOU!

Thank you to everyone who brought in their plants and who enjoyed viewing and learning a bit about winter growers! Our two judges, Kelly Griffin and Mark Fryer, awarded our main category winners and Judge's Awards. The Show Chair Award was awarded by Rick Bjorklund, and the President's Award was awarded by Pam Badger. We'll see you again at our meeting brag table on March 9th!

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS

PARTICIPATION AND SCORE RESULTS OF THE 2024 WINTER SHOW

See the final tallies below for our show results! We are thrilled to report that there were a whopping **302** plants entered into our show from **40** individual participants. As for the breakdown, we had 23 advanced growers, 10 intermediate entrants, and 7 novice enthusiasts. We strongly encourage all members to try their hand at showing at a future event!

NOVICE	1ST	2ND	3RD	NO PLACEMENT
Josh Allen	5	3	2	1
Mirlam Parent	4	1	1	0
Joshua Mendiola	3	2	0	0
Der-shing Helmer	2	1	0	0
Luis Gonzalez	2	0	0	0
Andrew Alcasid	1	0	0	1
Reggie Salazar	1	1	1	3

INTERMEDIATE	1ST	2ND	3RD	NO PLACEMENT
Chuck Ramey	9	4	0	0
Jared Petker	8	2	0	0
Suzy Foran	6	3	0	0
Alison Baldwin	5	1	0	0
Chris Miller	2	3	1	2
Rich Ryan	2	0	0	0
Norb Roden	1	0	0	0
Peter Hagopian	1	4	2	4
Don Jones	1	1	0	3
Sherman Blench	0	0	1	0
2 unmarked cards				

ADVANCED	1ST	2ND	3RD	NO PLACEMENT
Peter Walkowiak	15	4	2	1
Tina Zucker	6	5	5	2
Botanic Wonders	4	2	1	5
Brian Shepherd	4	6	2	1
DR Cactus & Succulent	4	2	2	2
Keith Tyler	4	1	1	4
Naomi Orosz	4	2	2	9
Dean Karras	3	0	2	1
Arnold Chaney	2	2	1	1
Kelly Griffith	2	0	1	2
Sphaerold	2	3	1	2
Rick Bjorklaud	2	2	1	1
Candy & Jerry Garner	1	1	1	4
Doug Hobson	1	2	2	2
Matt Maggio	1	2	1	4
Monalisa Palmer	1	1	1	3
Plog Connection	1	2	1	2
Steve Salley	1	2	3	0
Thorn Oasis	1	1	3	1
Jen Craig	0	1	1	4
Mike Fernandes	0	1	2	3
Pam Badger	0	0	4	2
Rita Lunceford	0	1	1	0

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST IN SHOW

Dudleya pachyphytum

Dean Karras

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST WINTER GROWER: NOVICE

Dudleya anthonyi

Ronald Labaco

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST WINTER GROWER: INTERMEDIATE

Haworthia emelyae cv. 'Pink Pearl'

Suzy Foran

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST WINTER GROWER: ADVANCED

Aloe cv. 'Twizzler'

Kelly Griffin

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST CACTUS: NOVICE

Astrophytum asterias cv. 'Super Kabuto' Star type

Reggie E Salazar

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST CACTUS: INTERMEDIATE

Mammillaria spinosissima

Chuck Ramey

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST CACTUS: ADVANCED

Copiapoa cinerea

Peter Walkowiak

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST SUCCULENT: NOVICE

Aeonium greenovia

Miriam Parent

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST SUCCULENT: INTERMEDIATE

Euphorbia polygona monstrose

Jared Petker

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



BEST SUCCULENT: ADVANCED

Tylecodon singularis

Sphaeroid Institute

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



JUDGE'S AWARD: MARK FRYER

Titanopsis mix

Brian Shepherd

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS

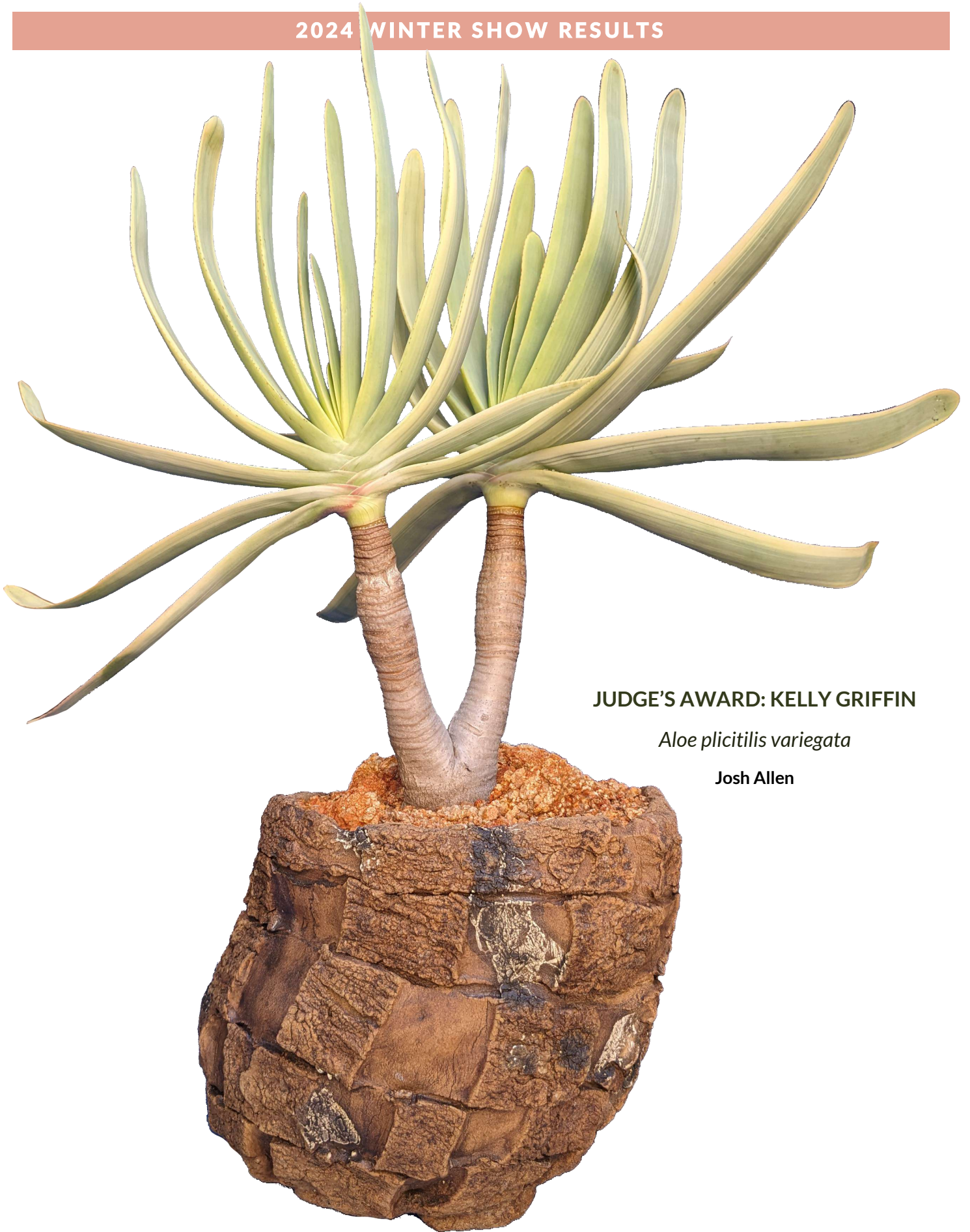


JUDGE'S AWARD: MARK FRYER

Mammillaria geminispina crested

Peter Walkowiak

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS

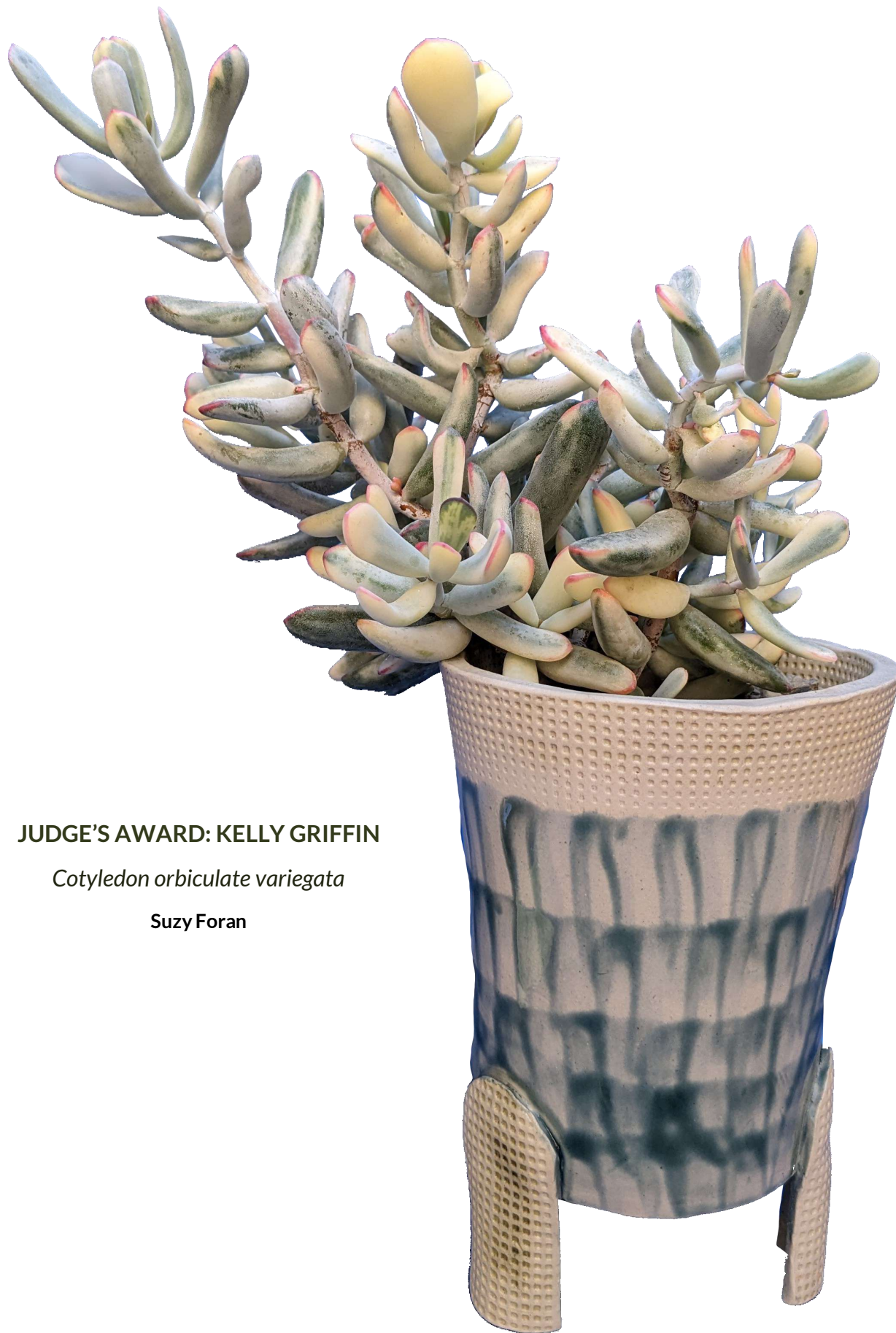


JUDGE'S AWARD: KELLY GRIFFIN

Aloe plicatilis variegata

Josh Allen

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



JUDGE'S AWARD: KELLY GRIFFIN

Cotyledon orbiculata variegata

Suzy Foran

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



SHOW CHAIR'S AWARD: RICK BJORKLUND

Turbinocarpus pseudopectinatus crest

Josh Allen

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



SHOW CHAIR'S AWARD: RICK BJORKLUND

Aloe x castilloniae variegata

Plug Connection

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



PRESIDENT'S AWARD: PAM BADGER

Mammillaria elongata 'Copper King'

Luis Gonzalez

2024 WINTER SHOW RESULTS



PRESIDENT'S AWARD: PAM BADGER

Euphorbia aeruginosa

Jared Petker



See you at our next Show in June 2024!