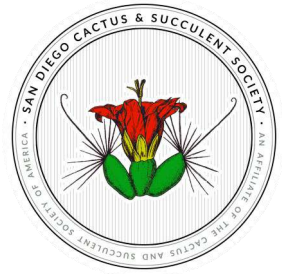


ESPINAS Y FLORES

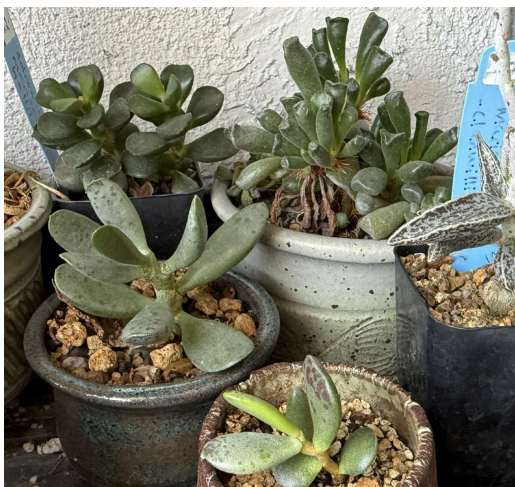


VOL. 61, No. 08
AUGUST 2026

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



UPCOMING SDCSS PICNIC // PLANT OF THE MONTH FEATURE //
IN MEMORIAM // JULY BRAG TABLE RESULTS // ...and more



ON THE COVER

A collection of *Adromischus*

Photo by Wendy Goldman

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's message pg 3 - 4

In Memoriam pgs 5- 6 // August Speaker pg 7

SDCSS Picnic Event pg 8

Plant of the Month feature pgs 9 - 12

July Brag Table results pgs 13 - 26

UPCOMING SDCSS SCHEDULE

OUR NEXT MEETING!

August 8th

SDCSS PICNIC EVENT

September 12th

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Kelly Griffin
Vice President	Der-shing Helmer
Secretary	Olga Batalov
Treasurer	Ken Brown

DIRECTORS

Rick Bjorklund, Patricia Bryan, Luis Gonzalez, Tom Knapik, Georgia Kenney, Rita Lunceford, and Jared Petker

COMMITTEES & SUBCOMMITTEES

Conservation	Herb Stern
Brag Table	Susan Hopkins & Rocco Piersanti
Plant of the Month	Denise Huntsman-Griffin
Summer/Winter Show	Jared Petker
Historian	Jerry Garner
Grants	Jerry Garner
Library Committee	Luis Gonzalez
Exchange Plants/Seeds	Michelle Heckathorn
Annual Sales	Rita Lunceford
Auction & Holiday Plants	Kelly Griffin
Monthly Plant Sales	Rita Lunceford
Benefit Drawing Table	Chuck Ramey & Norb Roden
Programs	Kelly Griffin
Reception	Susan Hopkins, Lien Lieu, & Candy Garner

New Member Orientation Patricia Bryan & Jay Crowley

Monthly Regalement Sandy Wetzel-Smith

Picnic Regalement Georgia Kenney

Coffee in the Garden Coordinator

Jodi Visosky

LIAISONS

Balboa Park Desert Garden
Susan Hopkins

CSSA Affiliate Rep Rick Bjorklund

SD Botanic Foundation Lynn Elliot

SD Zoo Safari Park, Baja, & Old World Gardens
May Fong Ho

Palomar CS Society Liaison
Brita Miller

MEMBERSHIP, BUSINESS, & PUBLICITY

Membership Olga Batalov

Business Manager Donna Roden

Newsletter Editor Der-shing Helmer

Webmaster Jared Petker

General Club Publicity Christie Lathrop

Show & Sale Publicity Patricia Bryan & Emily Shuffield

CONTACT SDCSS

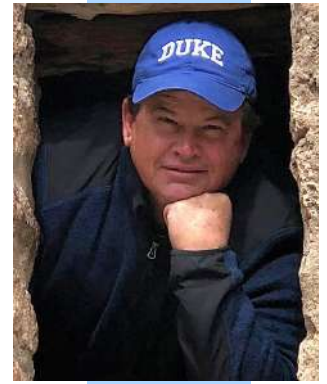
membership@sdcss.net

CONTACT EyF EDITOR

eyf.editor@gmail.com

Opinions expressed in articles and editorial comments are solely the opinions of the author or the editor, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the SDCSS, the board of Directors, or the organization as a whole. All material submitted to the *Espinas y Flores* for possible publication may be edited in form and content and shared on the club's social media with attribution. All material contained in the *Espinas y Flores* may be reprinted by other non-profit organizations unless permission is expressly denied in a note accompanying the article. Reproduction in whole or part by any other organization without the express consent of the editor is prohibited.

We were treated last month to a wonderful presentation by a new SDCSS speaker, Trevor Adler. His topic was one nearly everyone could benefit from: how to take better smartphone photos of our plants. Although he admitted to being a bit nervous, he absolutely knocked it out of the park. Trevor has remarkable talent and, even better, is generous in sharing it. His presentation was both entertaining and informative—a real treat for everyone who attended.



Olga Batalov presented our Plant of the Month, focusing on variegated and crested succulents. It was the perfect complement to Trevor's presentation, and both programs were very well received. If you missed the meeting, I hope you had a very good reason!

Our August meeting promises to be just as enjoyable. Wendy Goldman will present the Plant of the Month, *Adromischus*. I'm looking forward to seeing what fascinating plants and information she has to share.

Our very own Rita Lunceford will also be presenting on her experiences importing plants from China. Rita has traveled there several times and will share both the sights she encountered and the insights she gained along the way. This is a topic we don't often hear about—in fact, I don't recall us ever exploring it before. China is home to some incredible collections and remarkable plants, so I'm excited to hear Rita's unique perspective.

On a sad note, shortly after our Summer Show, we lost longtime potter Tom Biggart of Granite Hills Pottery. Tom contributed to our club in more ways than many people realize. His artistry was evident in the beautiful pots he provided for our SDCSS sales, and his presence was always appreciated at our events. I feel fortunate to own several of his uniquely beautiful creations, and I will miss seeing him.

At the end of June, we also lost longtime member and SDCSS Life Member Phyllis Fleshsig, just four days before her 95th birthday. Phyllis contributed enormously to our collective knowledge and generously supported both the Palomar Club and SDCSS through plant sales, presentations, and her willingness to teach and share her experience. She will be greatly missed.

I know this is a repeat, but it bears repeating!

Two reminders: First, please bring one or two of your favorite plants for our

Brag Table. We all enjoy seeing what our members are growing, and who knows? The odds might be in your favor—you could even go home a winner!

Second, thank you to everyone who brings snacks to share during our break. They are always appreciated. We've had a few requests to include some healthier options in the mix, so if you're planning to bring something, please consider adding a healthy choice.

I hope to see all of you at our August meeting!

Kelly Griffin

July 25, 2026



SDCSS Summer Show 2026 winners Brian Shepherd, Tina Zucker, some EyF editor, Kelly Griffin, and Jared Petker. Did you miss getting your certificate? Come to the August meeting and grab yours if you haven't already!

In Memoriam
TOM BIGGART
May 6, 1938– June 13, 2026

Article Reprinted from the San Diego
County Orchid Society Newsletter,
July 2026



Longtime SDCOS Life Member Tom Biggart passed away Saturday, June 13, 2026 of complications of old age. He is survived by two daughters, a son, and several grand and great-grand children from his marriage to Neal Biggart, who predeceased him. He is also survived by two daughters from his first marriage.

I first met Tom almost exactly 46 years ago when I walked into my first SDCOS meeting to what would become a familiar friendly greeting from him. He was outgoing and always as happy to see an old friend as to make a new one. Tom joined the SDCOS in the early '70s and served in various offices over the years, most recently as a member of the nominating

committee. If you are a current SDCOS officer, you may have Tom to thank (or not!).

Tom's orchid collection grew significantly when he and his family moved to El Cajon and built, with the help of his orchid family, a large greenhouse where he grew the plants that we often saw at SDCOS meetings. He certainly had a knack of growing beautiful flowers. He enjoyed many plants beyond orchids, especially bromeliads, and often experimented with seeds collected somewhere in his travels. From Tom I learned never to weed other people's orchid plants. At one time he had planted seeds of a rare eucalyptus by dropping them into the pot of one of his orchids. A visitor to the greenhouse saw some shoots of what was obviously not an orchid and pulled them up—there went that experiment!

In later years Tom and Neal got into pottery, taking most of the ceramics classes offered at Grossmont Community College. Neal made mugs, cups, dishes, and ornamental items, while Tom made orchid pots; they both had a remarkable eye for what would make a simple yet pleasing and functional ceramic. We will all miss Tom's happy greeting at Orchid Society events or anywhere for that matter!

PETER TOBIAS

In Memoriam
PHYLLIS FLECHSIG
June 26, 1931– June 21 2026

Article adapted from the
[obituary for Phyllis Flechsig](#),
July 2026



Phyllis Flechsig, cactus and succulent grower, known for hand-pollinating and growing rare plants from seed, including the well-known epiphyllum ‘Clown’, died at age 94. The cause was heart failure.

She ran a small cactus nursery specializing in plants for collectors looking for the unusual: “If you can get it at Home Depot, I’m not going to grow it.” Phyllis was active in several local plant clubs, such as the Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society and San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society, both of which named her an honorary life member. She was an early docent at Quail (now San Diego) Botanic Garden in Encinitas, where as a young mother she accompanied the founders on trips to acquire large cacti and succulents for the

park. She was named their Volunteer of 2012.

Phyllis Bettina Grant was born in Berkeley, CA, to Marian Wildman Grant and Phil Stringham Grant, the supervisor of Subject A English at UC Berkeley. A 1949 graduate of San Ramon Valley High School, she played bassoon in her high school marching band and later, violin in her college orchestra. After graduating from Pomona College in 1953, Phyllis met and married Art Flechsig, a marine biologist at Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla.

Like both her parents, Phyllis had always been an ardent gardener, and in the late 1970s she opened a mail-order business in cacti and succulents which she grew herself. She retired from a series of jobs in technical editing to give full time to her expanding business.

After ten years, wanting to travel more with her husband, Art, she quit the mail-order portion of the business and continued to sell plants through the various cactus and succulent societies she belonged to. Because she loved to grow from seed, she amassed a huge collection with two greenhouses and a shade house, built by her husband.

KATRIN FLECHSIG



AUGUST 8TH
SPEAKER
RITA LUNCEFORD
“SUCCULENT
NURSERIES OF
CHINA”

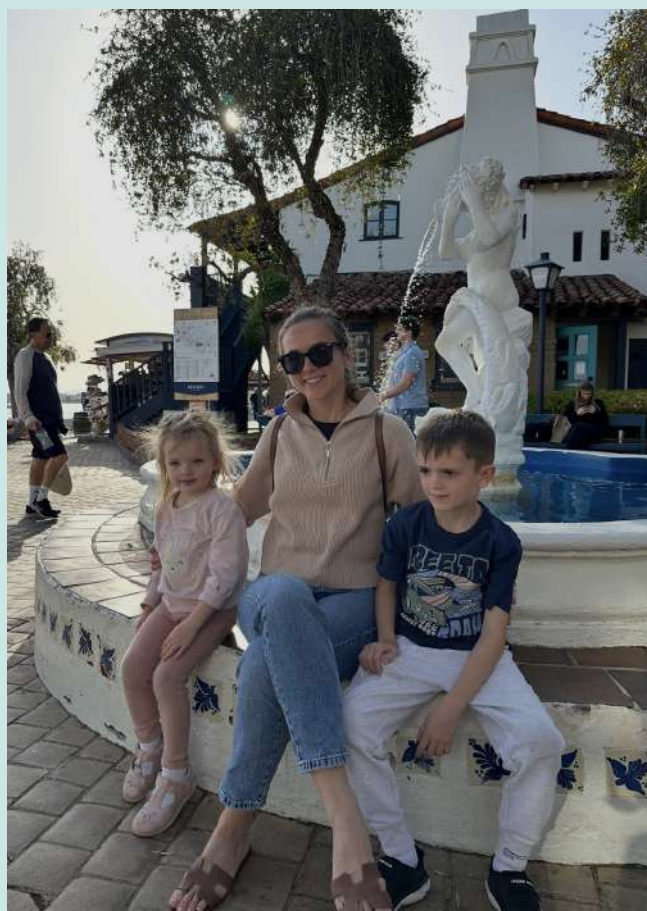
ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Rita Lunceford is the owner of Grow Margo, a San Diego-based grower specializing in rare cacti and succulents. She started her business in 2019 by propagating and selling cuttings from home. What began as a small side gig has grown into a thriving business with a large greenhouse and thousands of plants sold to collectors throughout the United States.

A mom of two, Rita has built Grow Margo while balancing family life and a passion for plants. She also serves as the Sales Chair for the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society, where she enjoys bringing together growers, vendors, and collectors through the Society's shows and sales.

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER TOPIC

Rita regularly travels internationally to visit growers and source exceptional plants. In this presentation, she will share her recent experiences exploring China's cactus and succulent industry, visiting nurseries that few Western collectors have seen, and navigating the process of importing plants into the United States. Join her for an inside look at one of the world's largest succulent-growing regions through photos, stories, and behind-the-scenes insights.



OUR PLANT OF THE MONTH TOPIC

Join us at 1am, just before Rita's talk, for a Plant of the Month presentation about ***Adromischus*** presented by Wendy Goldman. Catch a preview of this subject in this month's newsletter!

SEE YOU ON AUGUST 8TH, 2026!

Date: Sat, September 12th Time: 11am - 2pm

Address: [Kate Sessions Park, 5115 Soledad Rd, San Diego CA](#)

We're meeting at: Area 4



Picnic table



Playground



Flagpole

Kate O'Sessions Neighborhood Park
5115 Soledad Road, San Diego CA 92109
Acres: 19.05 Park Capacity: 850



Parking



Restroom



COME FOR THE PICNIC GAMES, CAMARADERIE, FOOD AND--OF COURSE--PLANTS!

FOOD: Taco Cart lunch SDCSS is chipping in to cover costs... if you're a member, that's just \$10 for a great lunch that would normally cost \$22. The Non-member fee is \$15. Both are a terrific value!

PLANTS: Bring your best plant for a PLANT SWAP! This will work the exact same as our Holiday Party swap... if your plant is chosen, you're up to pick a plant next. Label your plant to participate, but we'll also have labels at the picnic. **FREE SUCCULENT** with your ticket? You bet. We can guarantee free plants for the first 50 individuals who show up at the picnic, and hopefully more.

FUN: In addition to the plant swap, we have a number of games planned for all mobility levels. Wear your best sun hat and bring a chair. Extra chairs are welcomed to share, please label them.

While our space is reserved from 9am to 3pm, the planned activities are from 12 to 2.

For any questions before the event, please contact Georgia at georgiakenney619@gmail.com or call Georgia on the day of the event at 619-370-4390

TICKETS SALES CLOSE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH. PURCHASE HERE!
SEE YOU ON SEPTEMBER 12TH, 2026!

ADROMISCHUS

BY WENDY GOLDMAN

Adromischus (pronounced “ad-ROH-miss-kus”) are some of my favorite plants. The name comes from Greek: *adros* (“thick”) + *mischos* (“stem”), literally “thick stem”.

There’s a lot to love about these small plants. Here are some of their best features:

- ◆ They’re easy to grow
- ◆ They usually stay relatively small, so you can have a lot of them!
- ◆ There are different interesting-looking forms.
- ◆ They’re easy to propagate.

Adromischus is in the *Crassulaceae* family, and closely related to *Cotyledon* and *Tylecodon*. If you’re familiar with the *Crassula* family of plants, many of them are easy to grow.

According to the only book on the topic I’m aware of (“*The Cactus File Handbook 3: Adromischus*”, by Pilbeam et. al; 1998), there are 28 distinct species, with many subspecies and newer hybrids appearing in recent years.

THEY’RE EASY TO GROW

Adromischus tend to grow in rock crevices. They can tolerate shade to full sun in our area, although they prefer not to be in full sun in the hottest times of the year. Coming from South Africa and Namibia, most are considered winter growers, so it makes sense that they’d be unhappy with our July-September heat. Mine do grow all year, but they may slow down or go dormant in the hottest times of year. They can tolerate temperatures close to freezing overnight.

They flower in summer and hummingbirds love them due to sticky nectar on the flowers. The flowers are small but interesting, and last for weeks. In fact, the genus is grouped into five sections, based on their flowers.

Water when dry, usually about once a week for me, but that depends on the weather, your soil mix and location. As with any succulents, overwatering equals a mushy death. If you accidentally do overwater them, as long as there are still healthy

A. marianiae “Clanwilliam”
Wendy Goldman

leaves, there's hope because of how easy they are to propagate, which we'll cover in a bit.

Adromischus are susceptible to the usual pests, and mealy bugs are mentioned as a problem, but, personally, I've only had problems on Adro's with scale insects.

THEY'RE SMALL PLANTS, SO YOU CAN HAVE A LOT OF THEM

The biggest *Adro*'s only get to about a foot tall and maybe the same in width. However, the flower inflorescences can get about a foot long, but they're thin and bendy, so they won't interfere with any other plants. (Other than potential cross-pollination with other *Adro*'s.)

Most plants in the genus are significantly smaller, and within each species, there's a lot of variability of leaf forms and colors. (So you can have a lot of them!)

A. maximus is the tallest, with leaves about 5-6 inches long, and getting about a foot tall. I do have an *A. alstonii* that's about a foot tall, but slow growing and the leaves are much smaller than *A. maximus*.

MOST ARE SIGNIFICANTLY SMALLER, AND THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MOST COMMON AND EASIEST TO FIND

A. cooperi, commonly called "Plover's Eggs". Thick, oval leaves marked with purplish-brown blotches that resemble speckled bird eggs.

A. cristatus is one of the most widely grown *Adromischus* in cultivation. Grey-green, wedge-shaped leaves with a crimped, undulating margin covered in fine aerial roots that look like hairs. "*Cristatus*" means "crested," referring to the ruffled edge. A fast-growing plant.

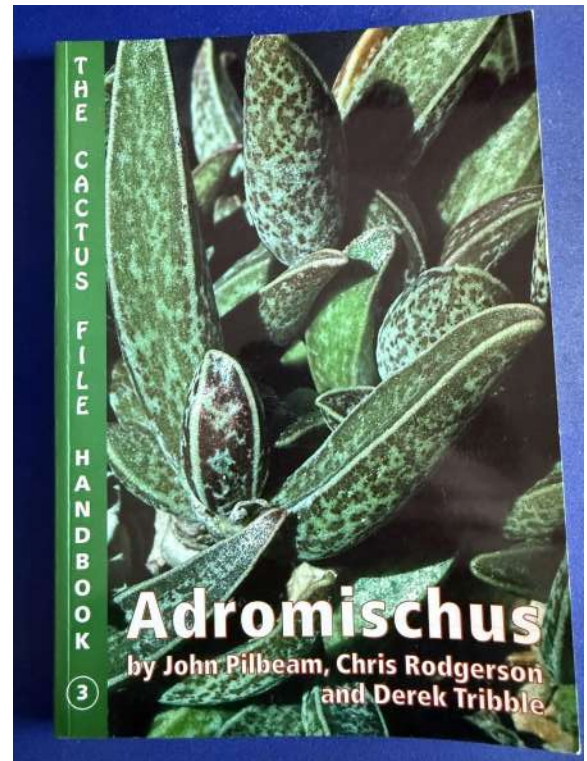
A. cristatus zeyheri is much less hairy, but has lime green ruffled leaves.

A. cristatus schoenlandii is hairy, with narrow leaves and ruffled edges. The leaves can be slightly furry or slightly sticky. Fast-growing.

A. filicaulis has narrow leaves that are generally pointed at the tip. Their coloring is very variable, ranging from green to red or purple spots. Growers are now naming some of these as different varieties based on leaf size and/or markings, for example "bloodspot" with many red spots, or "titanic" with large leaves.

A. leucophyllus is a beautiful plant, low-growing with white farina on the leaves, thus the name "*leucophyllus*" which means "white leaved". Slow-growing.

A. maculatus, *trigynus* and *triflorus* look very similar and are often confused for each other. The way to tell them apart is that *maculatus* is described as having a "horny edge" around the entire leaf, whereas *triflorus* only has the hard edge at the top of



"*Adromischus*" by Pilbeam et. al.
Wendy Goldman

the leaf". Honestly, it's very hard to tell them apart. If you really want to be sure, check the descriptions and the flowers. *Maculatus* and *triflorus* are in flower Section 4, while *trigynus* is in Section 2.

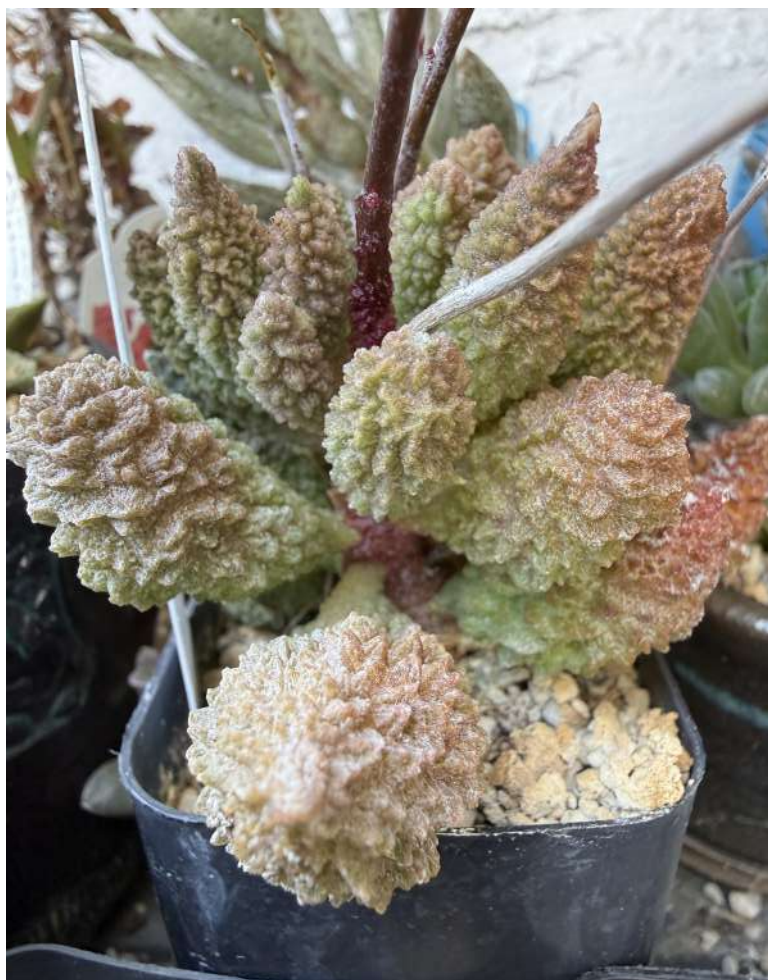
A. schuldtianus has brown ruffled edges on green to silvery-green leaves. It has a thick tuberous root that can be raised given time, since it's a slow grower. Stays small.

A. schuldtianus* ssp. *juttae has the same characteristics as above, with small, narrower leaves without ruffles. It generally has red spots.

I broke the alphabetical order to save the best for last, with the species that is often the favorite:

Adromischus marianiae is the single most variable, and probably the most beautiful species in the genus. Leaf shape and color vary dramatically from chalky white, deep red, to warty or smooth. Several forms that were once described as their own species, like the popular "*herrei*", are now classified as forms of *marianiae*. The book lists the *A. marianiae* type description, followed by 12 named varieties. The book was published in 1998, and these days the plants listed as the type description are usually sold as variety "*Clanwilliam*".

Here are four of my favorites:



A. marianiae "Herrei"

Wendy Goldman

***A. marianiae* "Clanwilliam"** Gets a thick tuberous root, with elongated leaves that have a ridged groove on the upper side.

***A. marianiae* "Bryan Makin"** Originally brought to England in 1962 by Bryan Makin. A distinctive plant with many dark reddish-brown markings on the leaves.

***A. marianiae* "Herrei"** Very variable in leaf color and texture. Tends to have many raised tubercles on the leaves. Color varies from green to bright red, to purplish, and everything in between. Probably the most sought-after species. Slow growing.

***A. marianiae* "Little Spheroid"** The name says it all. The leaves are small spheres. Slow growing.

PROPAGATION

They can be grown from seed or stem cuttings, but they're very easy to grow from leaves. The good and bad with *Adromischus* is leaves fall off really easily. If you buy them through mail-order, guaranteed they'll have fallen leaves in the package. The plants will

recover, given time. The good is that the leaves root easily, so you get more plants!

You can also snap off a healthy leaf at its base, let the wound callus over for a few days, then stick it upright or lying on the soil surface of a gritty mix. No rooting hormone is needed. Many species will root and sprout a new plantlet from the leaf base within weeks to a few months. Be aware that the slower-growing species stay in character and take longer to root.

Adromischus can be very rewarding plants to grow, propagate and share with friends. You know you have a good friend when they give you a “Herrei” leaf!

WENDY GOLDMAN



A. marianiae “Clanwilliam”

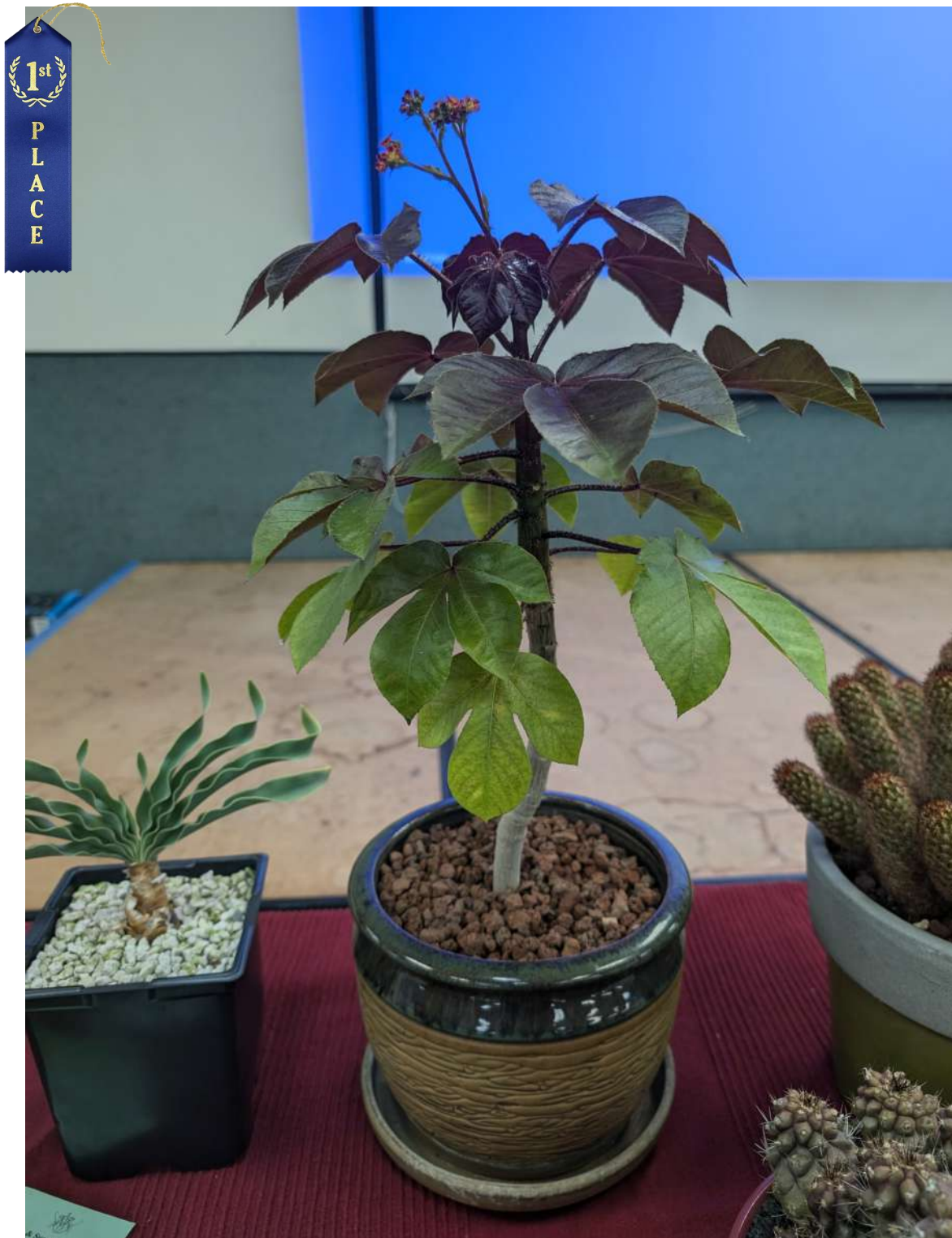
Wendy Goldman



HAWORTHIA TROLLICILIS
WITH IRONIC POT :]
BY EMILY SHUFFIELD

SDCSS members shared a lovely table of plants at the July Meeting's Brag Table!

Thank you for bringing in your plants to the Brag Table!
We'll see you at our next one in August... novices, this is your chance to kick butt
and grab some club bucks while you're at it!



1ST: *JATROPHA GOSSYPIIFOLIA*

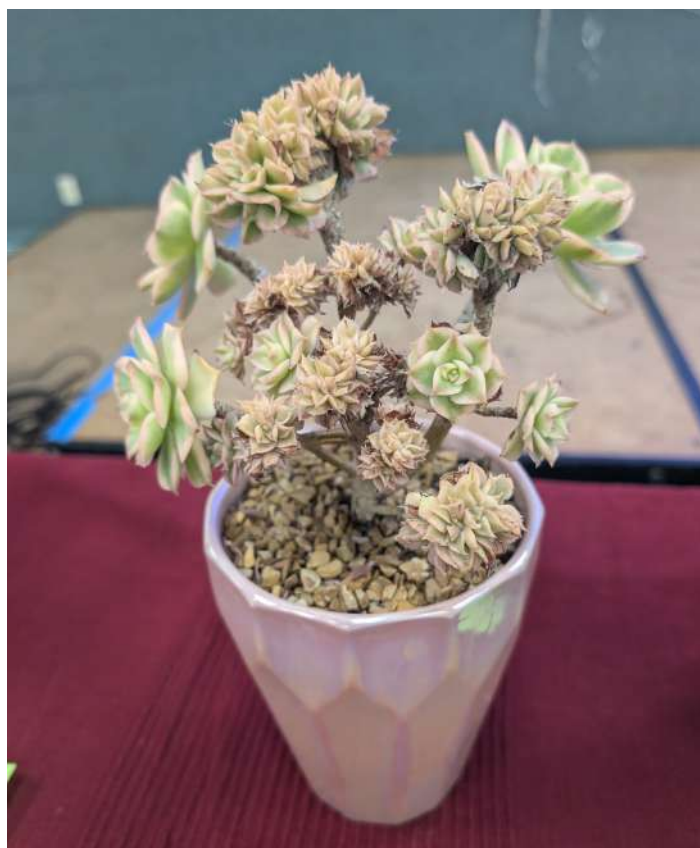
AMY KONOPASEK

2ND: *BOOPHONE HAEMANTHOIDES*

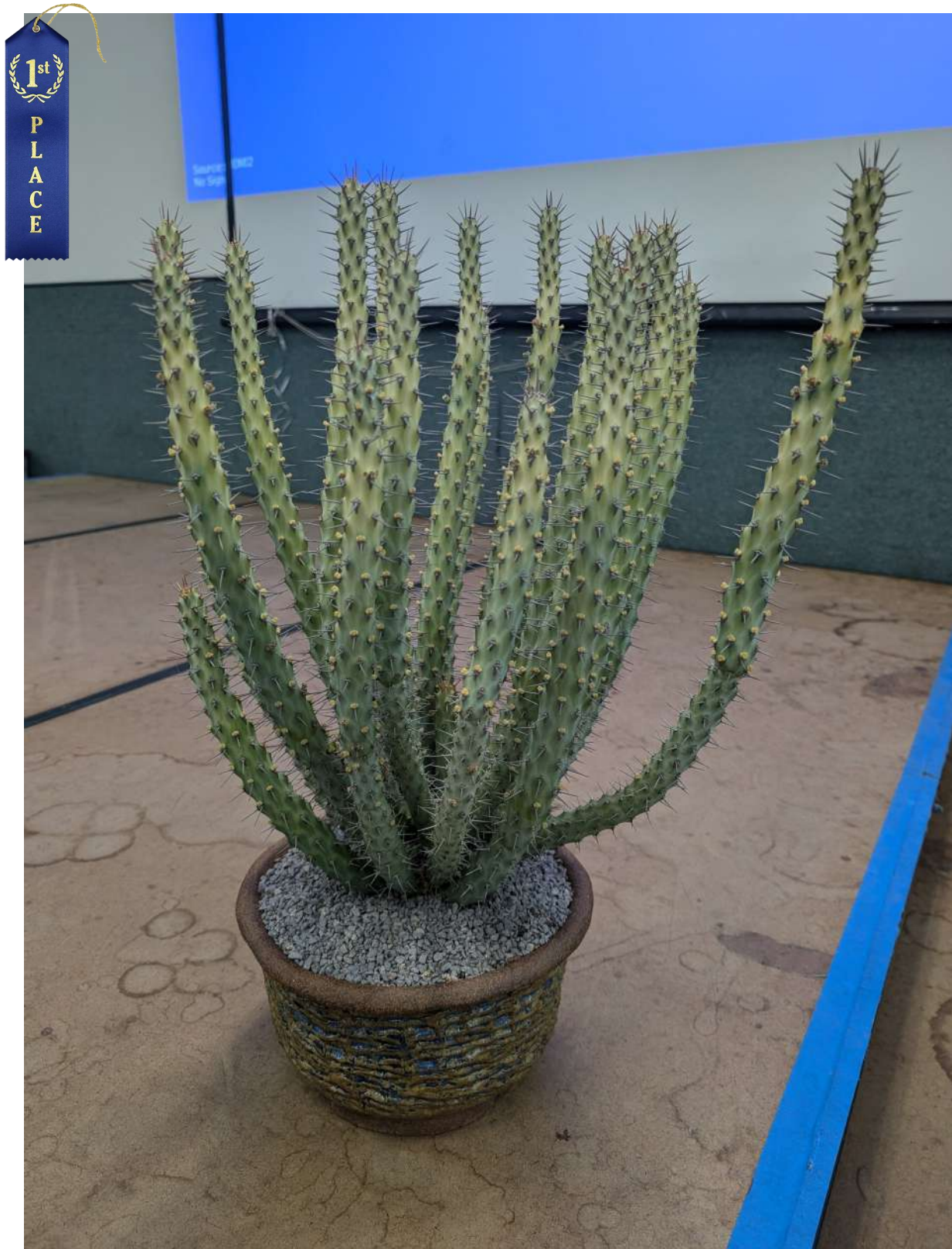
SKYLER WALSH

3RD: *HAWORTHIA TROLLII*

EMILY SHUFFIELD

*AEONIUM SP. CRESTED*

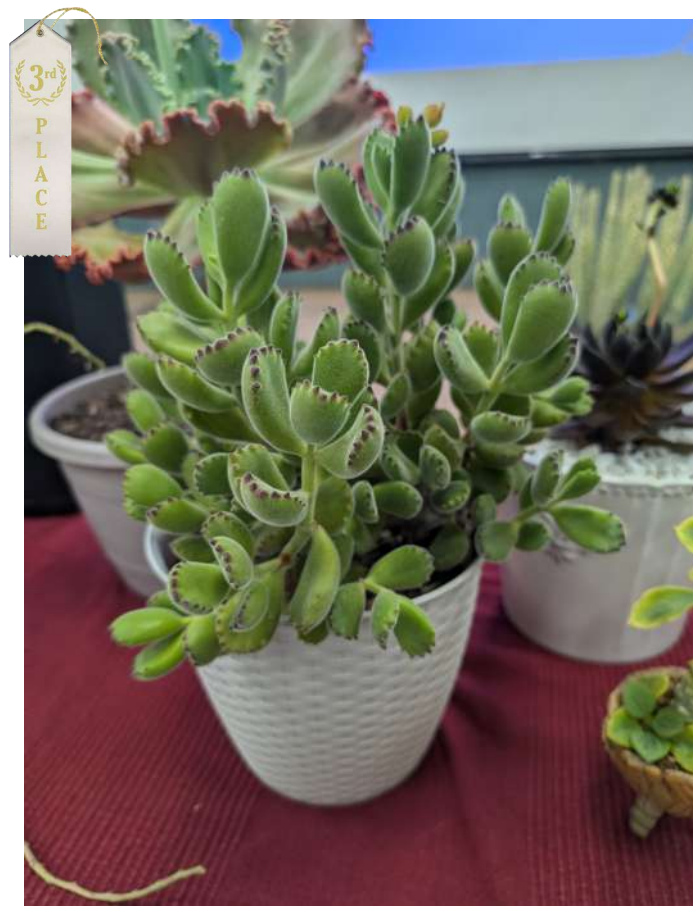
EMILY SHUFFIELD

1ST: *EUPHORBIA TRIACULEATA*

JARED PETKER



2ND: *MONADENIUM RITCHIEI* VARIEGATED SUZY FORAN



3RD: *KALANCHOE TOMENTOSA* MIRIAM A PARENT



Echeveria 'DICK'S PINK' MIRIAM A PARENT



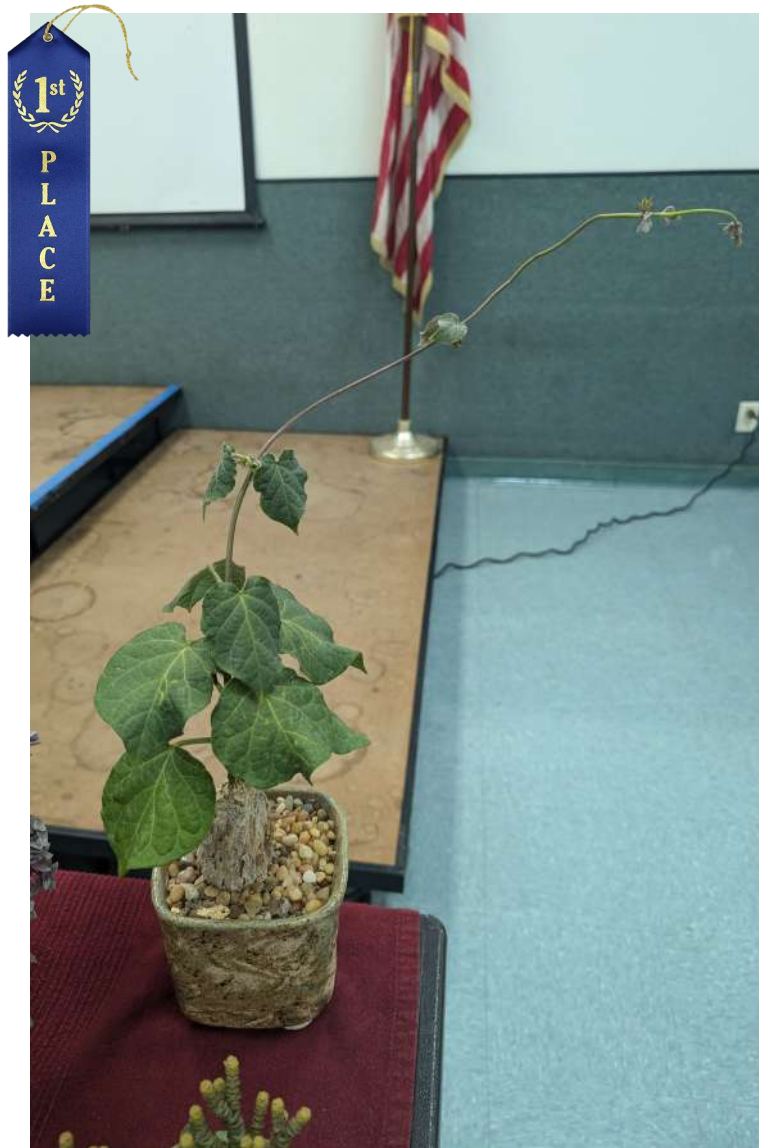
Echeveria 'BLACK PRINCE' MIRIAM A PARENT

*Echeveria 'Big Red Crest'*

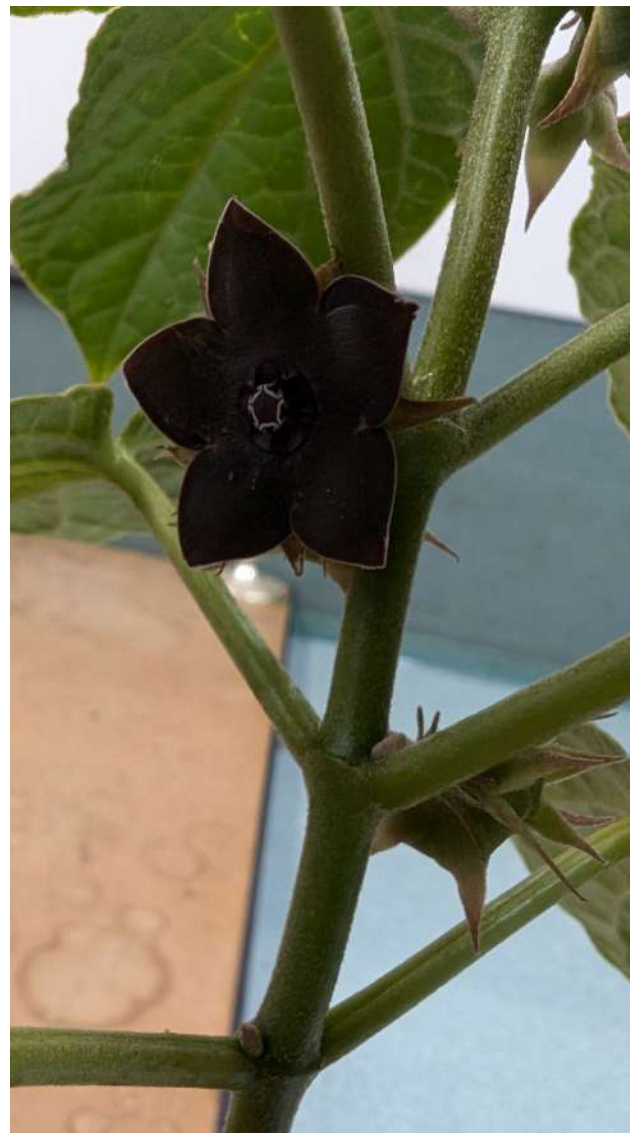
VICKI HOFFMAN

*Caralluma subulate*

[NO NAME PROVIDED]



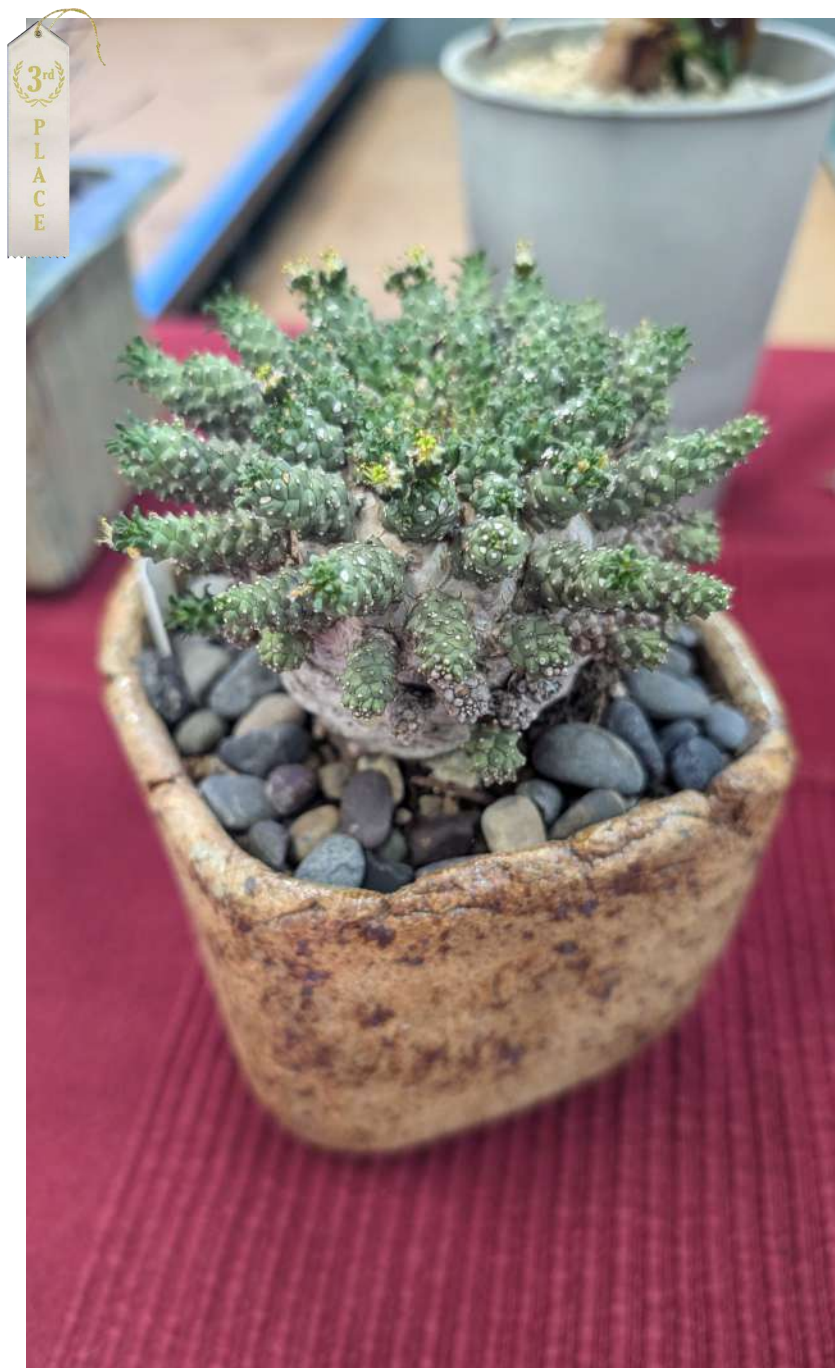
1ST: MATALEA CYCLOPHYLLA



TINA ZUCKER

2ND: *ALOE PEARSONII*

KELLY GRIFFIN

3RD: *EUPHORBIA GORGONIS*

CANDY & JERRY GARNER



TRADESCANTIA 'CALLISIA REPENS PINK PANTHER' TINA ZUCKER



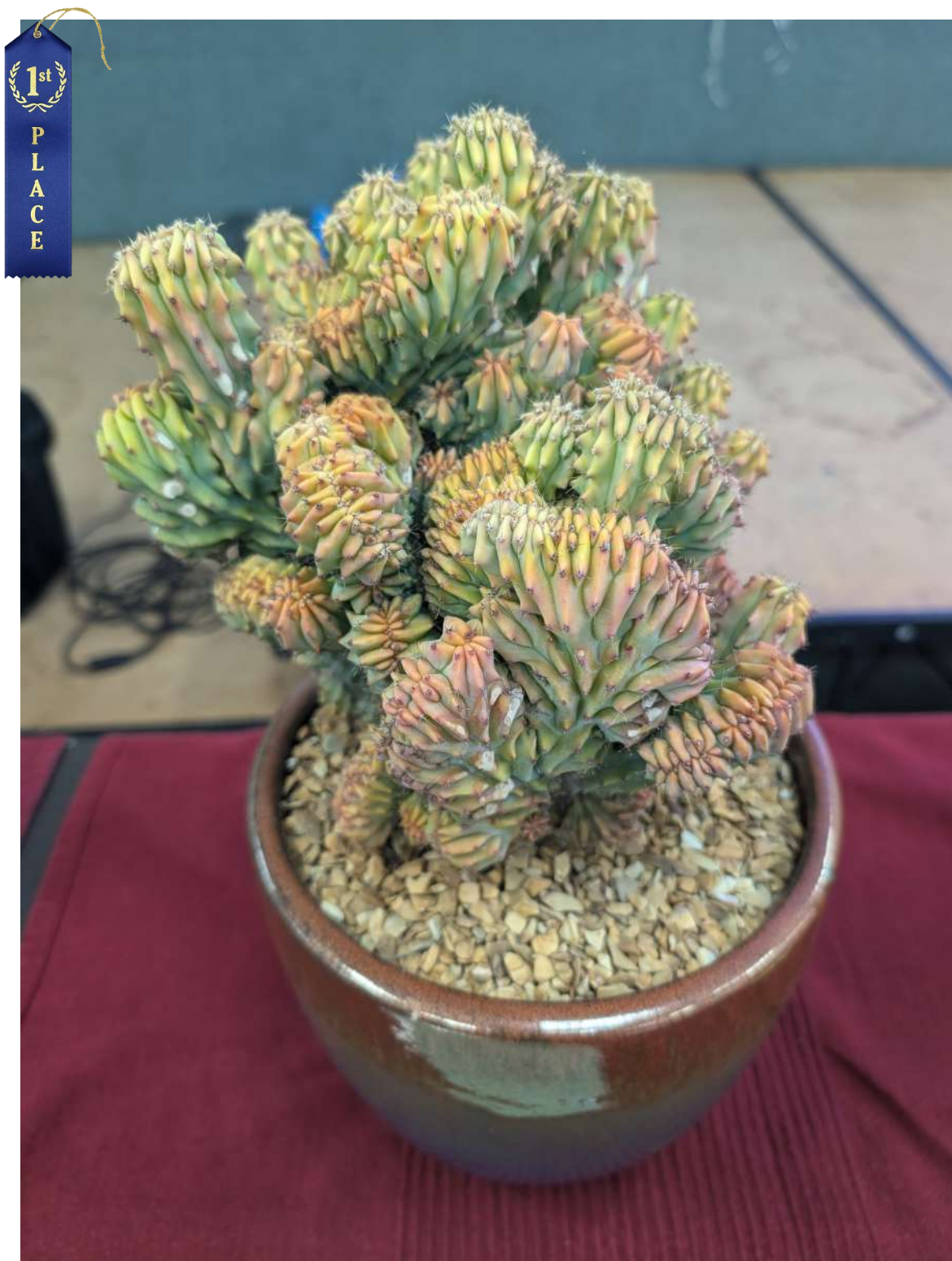
CRASSULA 'BABY NECKLACE'

TINA ZUCKER



LITHOPS BROMFIELDII 'SULPHERA'

TINA ZUCKER



1ST: MYRTILLOCACTUS GEOMETRIZANS 'ELITE CREST'

ROCCO PIERSANTI

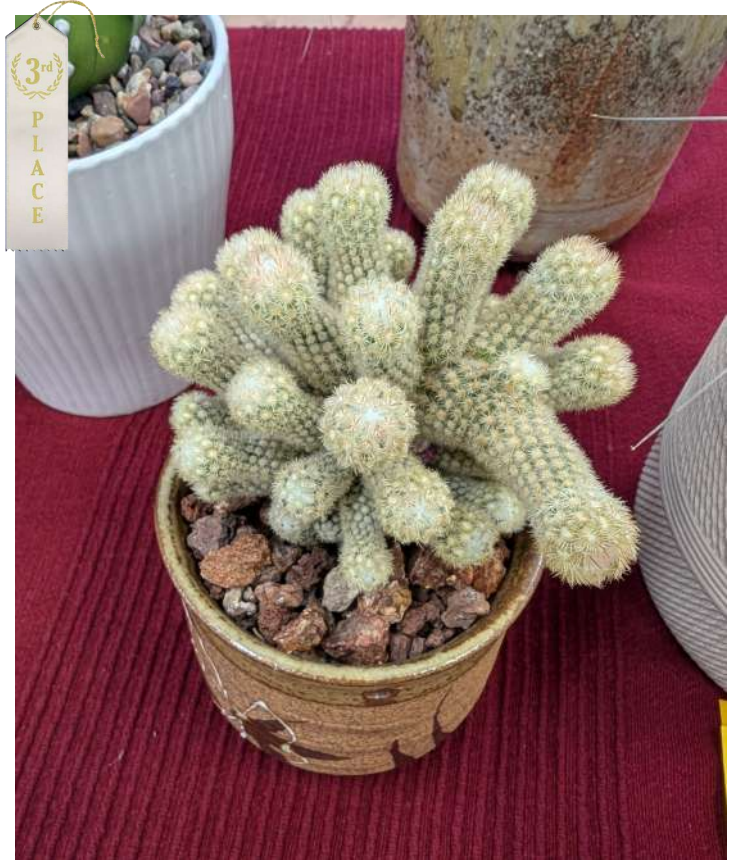


1ST: *COPIAPOA HUMILIS*

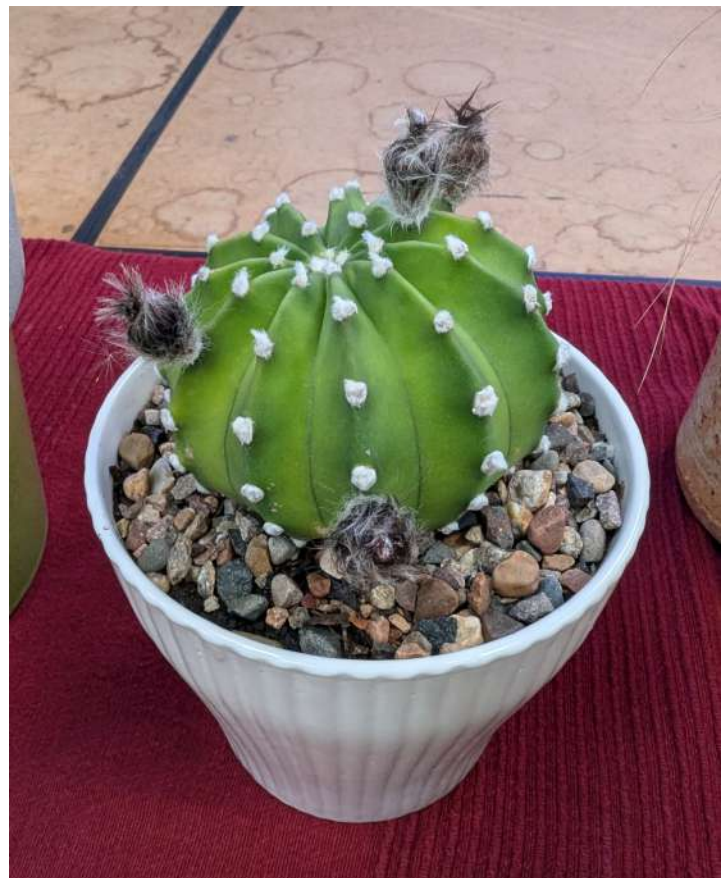
JODI VISOSKY

2ND: *THELOCACTUS RINCONENSIS*

SUE THOMAS

3RD: *MAMMILLARIA ELONGATA MONSTROSE*

VICKI HOFFMAN

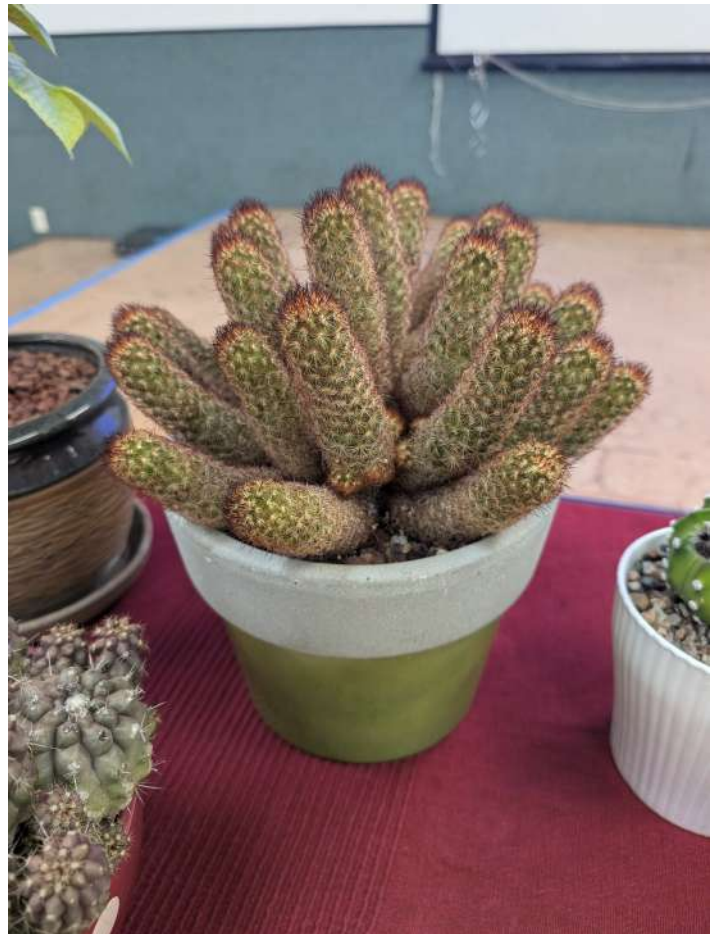
*TEPHROCACTUS AORACANTHUS PAEDIOPHILUS* SUE THOMAS*ECHINOPSIS SUBDENUDATA*

MIRIAM A PARENT



OPUNTIA DIPLOURSINA

SUE THOMAS



MAMMILLARIA ELONGATA

VICKI HOFFMAN



1ST: [NAME NOT RECORDED] [NAME NOT RECORDED]
(APOLOGIES, WINNER, MY PHOTO WAS TOO BLURRY TO READ!)



2ND: MAMMILLARIA KARWINSKIANA
CANDY & JERRY GARNER