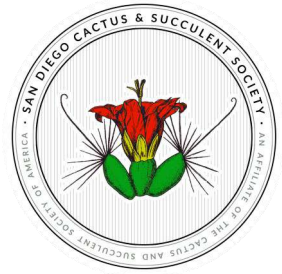


ESPINAS Y FLORES



VOL. 60, No. 11
NOVEMBER 2025

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



AVONIA // NOVEMBER GUEST SPEAKER // MEMBER SECTION //
OCTOBER BRAG TABLE // HOLIDAY PARTY // ...and more



ON THE COVER

Avonia papyracea ssp. namaqensis
near Springbok, Western Cape

Photo by Kelly Griffin

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UPCOMING SDCSS SCHEDULE

UPCOMING MEETING

November 8th

UPCOMING HOLIDAY PARTY EVENT!

December 13th

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, guys! We had a really great turn out for our picnic in Kate Sessions Park. Over a hundred signed up and a few more dropped by. Great weather, Great location and really great people!!

I want to thank some folks for making the right decisions and working hard to pull this off. I appreciate everyone, but thank you to Georgia Kenney and Emily Weaver for their efforts. Thank you to Jared Petker for bringing some home-grown Euphorbia rarities for gifts. Thank you Olga Batalov for taking care of the sign ups even though she was unable to attend, and Der-shing for the work she did on publicity and in other areas. The whole club always steps up. It is truly amazing to me, but thank you all!

It was very nice to get to know some of you when there was a little less going on than our regular meeting schedule. It was really nice to see Bill O'Daniel there, too, along with his son. I look forward to more stories and plants at future meetings.

We have a great lineup of program speakers, and next month is no exception. Our program will be from a Nurseryman's perspective and that is surely to have some plant growing advice we could all

use to grow our plants better. Josh Allen of Fairview Nursery will be our presenter and should have along with him some nice and unusual plants to buy as well. Don't miss it!

Our plant of the month will be on Avonia by Emily Shuffield, I am looking forward to learning more about this small but special group of plants from South Africa.

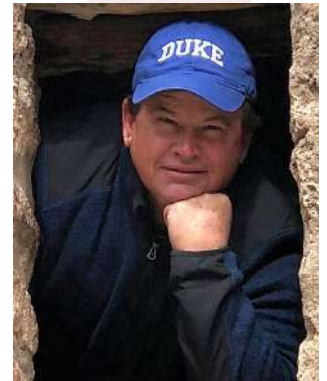
The brag table will be Faux Plants this month, so all you creative folks—get to work!

Our Holiday party is on the horizon, too. Signups were emailed recently, so please reserve your spot online or at the November meeting, and plan on coming! It is always a special event with lots of smiles and fun!

See you soon,

Kelly Griffin

October 26, 2025



UPCOMING GUEST SPEAKER**NOVEMBER 8TH SPEAKER****JOSH ALLEN**

**“A NURSERYMAN’S GROWING
PERSPECTIVE + A POST-CSSA
CONVENTION ROADTRIP TO VISIT
BAJA’S PLANT GOLD!”**

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

“My plant story began in 2005 when my wife and I visited East Africa for a month. I was bitten by the exotic plant bug. Soon after, we visited Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Australia and many more countries. I was inspired to start growing the more unusual plant species after seeing such amazingly beautiful and unique plants in their native habitat on my travels.

“My obsession of breeding and growing plants from seed quickly became a passion of mine. Soon this passion blossomed into Fairview Nursery and Gardens founded in 2012. We are currently growing over 300 species of plants ranging from the entry level to the hard-to-find collector plants and everything in between. My goal is to be one of the best rare plant nurseries in Southern California with an emphasis on Aloe, cacti and succulents.”

Josh’s main passion and dedication is hybridizing and breeding Aloes. This has been a very exciting and rewarding journey developing unique new Aloe hybrids for the nursery. Aloes are a big part of what we do and have gained enormous popularity. As a hard-working nurseryman, husband and

father of two boys, Josh is self-taught and studies at the college of “Mother Nature” as he travels into the field looking for his next adventure.

You can follow Josh at his Instagram @fairviewplants and visit his website, www.fairviewnursery.com

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER TOPIC

Part 1) Pest management, plant care and preventative maintenance for your succulent plants Part 2) A fun road trip to Baja with some of the CSSA Biennial Convention's Speakers and other friends to look at the very best plants Baja has to offer.

ABOUT OUR PLANT OF THE MONTH

Emily Shuffield will be speaking on the subject of Avonia. We haven’t had a focus on this species in recent memory, so it’s sure to be of interest to many! You can find a preview essay on the subject in this newsletter.

**SEE YOU ON
NOVEMBER 8TH, 2025!**

UPCOMING EVENT: HOLIDAY PARTY!

GET READY FOR OUR ANNUAL DECEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY—THE BEST TIME OF THE YEAR!

10:30-11:30: Check-in socializing, talking plants, checking out the gift plants, gift exchange plants, and auction items.

11:30: Awards ceremony.

12:00: Catered lunch served (vegetarian options available), pot-luck desserts, and gift exchange.

1:00: Numbers will be called for gift plants.

2:00: Silent auction.

MORE DETAILS

Pot-luck desserts: You are invited to bring your favorite dessert to share! Please bring a serving utensil if needed, with your name on it.

Gift Plants: SDCSS provides a free plant to all members. You will be given a ticket when you check in—save it for the drawing!

Gift Exchange (optional): You are invited to bring a plant to participate in the exchange, just put your name on the plant. **How it works:** a panel of judges will select the “Best Plant”, and the owner of that plant then gets first pick of all remaining plants. The owner of the plant they select then picks, and this continues until all plants are gone. Bring only one plant per person! As you might realize, the better the plant you bring, the sooner you get to pick! The “Best Plant” will be included in the Live Auction.

Silent auction: There will be a variety of items donated, along with some amazing centerpieces, which will be auctioned off during the party. Items will have cards to enter your bids. The highest bid at the close of the auction buys the item. If you want to donate an interesting cactus-related item you think someone would like, please bring it along.

Live auction: We will have a wonderful selection of bare-root cactus and other donated plants and items for a Live Auction, just get a numbered plate to participate. This is always lots of fun and the proceeds will be contributed towards the conservation of endangered cacti and succulents.

Tickets are \$35 for members and \$40 for non-members, and are available for purchase at the November meeting or [at this link on our website](#).



2026
Boophane disticha

2026 CLUB PINS!

Want to show off your love for the SDCSS? Now you can! Through our collectible club enamel pins, with a brand-new design offered every year!

Our newest pin to celebrate 2026 will be gifted, first-come-first-served, to holiday party goers... another great reason to pick up your ticket now for the December festivities!

PLANT OF THE MONTH: AVONIA

AVONIAS: A SHORT STORY ABOUT A SMALL GENUS OF TINY PLOANTS

ARTICLE BY EMILY SHUFFIELD

Raise your hand if you've killed an *Avonia quinaria*. (My hand is raised!) When I joined SDCSS I learned what a "three strikes plant" is. This one is mine. Hopefully the following information will be helpful in keeping the next one alive - for all of us!

DESCRIPTION

Avonias are dwarf perennial plants that originate in Southern Africa. They are described as having elongated stems radiating from either a hidden main stem or partly underground caudex. The stems have small green leaves that are nearly entirely concealed under dense sheaths of overlapping white stipules or scales. They have 3 celled capsules that split longitudinally to dehisce (gape or burst open), releasing winged or naked seeds. They are in the Family Portulacaceae and I was able to find 17 described species in this genus, however there may be more out there but the literature is scattered at this time. Most produce a flower with 5 petals. They grow in winter and summer rainfall areas and are very slow growers.

HISTORY

Avonias were previously grouped in the genus *Anacampseros*. In 1992 Maïke Gerbaulet divided the genus *Anacampseros* into two subgenera of *Anacampseros* and *Avonias*. Then in 1994 Gordon Rowley reviewed the literature and elevated *Avonia* to its own genus because *Anacampseros* has fleshy exposed leaves and *Avonias* have minute leaves hidden under white stipular scales. The purpose of these scales has a few theories. For camouflage to appear as bird droppings, to blend in with the quartz rocks where many are

Avonia quinaria ssp. *alstonii* near
Springbok Western Cape
Kelly Griffin

PLANT OF THE MONTH: AVONIA

found, and/or perhaps the scales are there to protect the delicate leaves from the sun as these plants are typically found in full sun and very arid climates. It has been noted however that they do not depend on this camouflage for survival because they often grow out in the open where goats frequently graze. Such small but mighty Avonias!

CULTIVATION CARE TIPS

Avonias grow in areas of low rainfall and low humidity so it is suggested to water around every 10 days in spring and fall, and only occasionally during winter as long as they remain in bright light and humidity stays low. In general, the less light they get, the less water they should get. You can also observe them and water only when they are growing and let them stay dry the rest of the year. Avonias prefer particularly well draining soil and extremely bright light. Full to mostly full sun is best. They can withstand some frost if the humidity is low, but high humidity will kill them more than the cold will.

Avonias are prone to mealy bugs so keep a close eye on them. They may be more sensitive to insecticides. So perhaps using less chemical methods is better like dish soap, or diluted isopropyl alcohol. However, I used Neem Oil spray on my *A. quinaria* before I read this information and it seemed to do ok. (But don't listen to me!) In cultivation Avonias seem to be happy in a smaller pot, so don't

*Avonia quinaria*

Emily Shuffield

*Avonia albissima*, reprinted with permission

@cactiandcarnivorous

PLANT OF THE MONTH: AVONIA



A. quinaria ssp. *alstonii* and *A. papyracea* ssp. *namaquensis* near Springbok Western Cape

Kelly Griffin

overpot them. In nature they grow alongside baby toes or *Fenestraria* so care would be similar to these plants.

A FEW FUN FACTS

A. rodesica and *A. papyracea* are used by native people in traditional beer making, and *A. ustulata* is used in beer making and as a yeast substitute. With the small size and slow growth of these plants, that must be some special beer!

EMILY SHUFFIELD

CITATION LIST

1. Dortort, Fred. The Timber Press Guide to Succulent Plants of the World; A Comprehensive Reference to More Than 2000 Species. 2011.
2. Gideon F. Smith, Neil R. Crouch, and Estrela Figueiredo. Field Guide to Succulents in Souther Africa 2017.
3. Doreen Court. Succulent Flora of Southern Africa revised edition 2010.
4. Jacques van Thiel and John Lavranos. Avonia Harveyi, a new species from Namibia. Cactus World, December 2011. Vol 29, no. 4, pp. 223-225.

MEMBER SECTION

November Haiku: Avonia

Delicate and small
Yet mimics Medusa's rage
Writhing scaly snakes

EMILY WEAVER



I am a recent member and love experimenting with succulents in our backyard. We were surprised by this one last week, first an origami-like box bloom and then a starfish!

MELANIE LUNSFORD

The SDCSS monthly newsletter welcomes and appreciates essays, photography, artwork, and similar contributions from its members.

If you have a contribution related to cacti and succulents that you'd like to share with the club, please let us know, and you could see your work in a future issue.

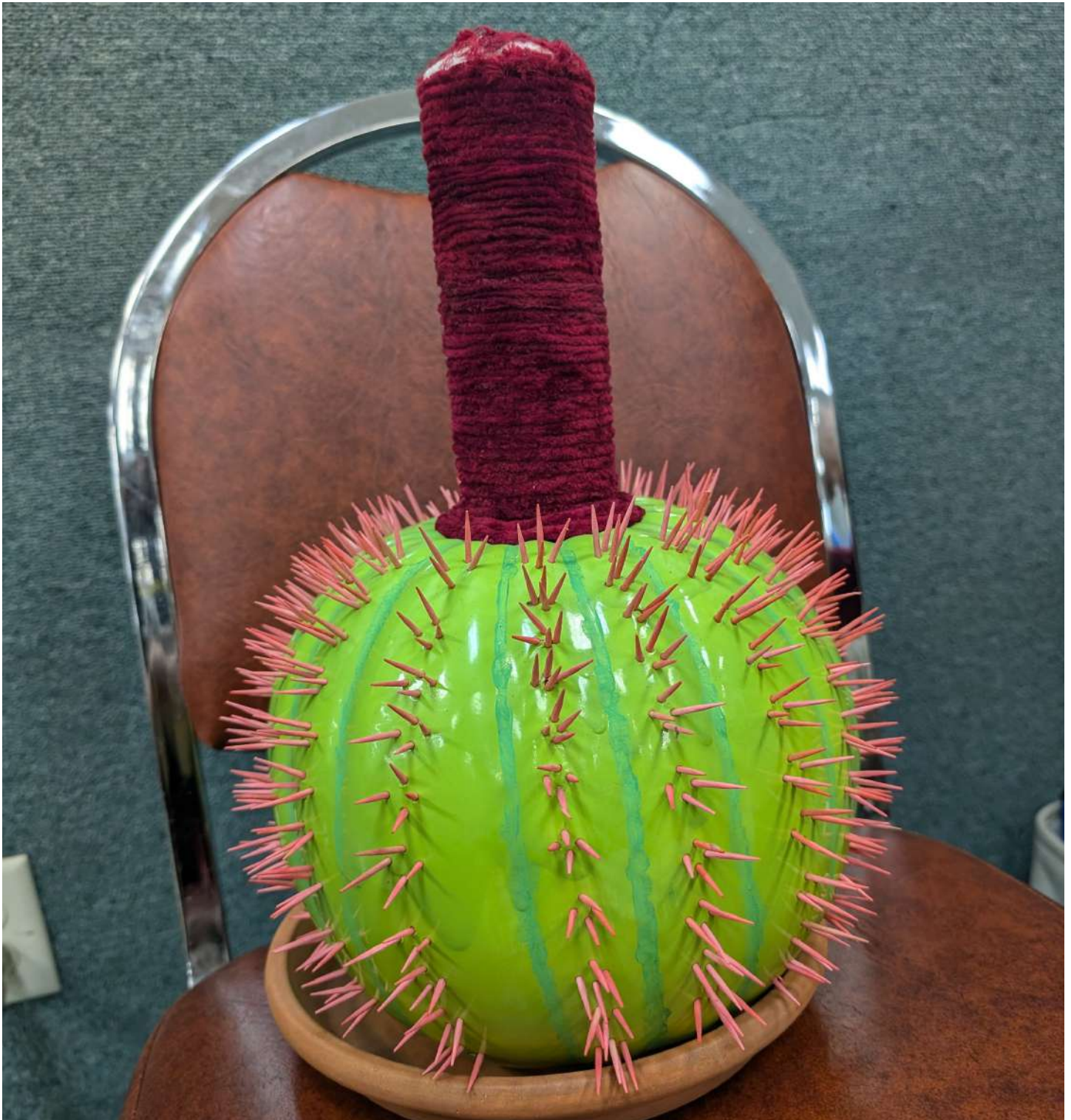
We'd love to hear from you!

Contact the editor: eyf.editor@gmail.com

CLICK TO VISIT US ONLINE!



SAN DIEGO
Cactus & Succulent Society

NOVEMBER BRAG TABLE REMINDER**Time to get creative for the Faux Plant Table**

It is, once again, that time of year where we celebrate our famous (infamous?) Faux Plant Table! In November, please bring your most creative and unusual faux cacti and succulents creations (and we sure do love a clever name) for the faux table. We can't wait to see what you come up with this year!