



ON THE COVER

Pam Badger's garden (before renos) Photo by Pam Badger

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SDCSS SCHEDULE

Our next in-person meeting: April 9th **Upcoming meeting (special conditions):**

May 14th 1-4pm ONLY

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Pam Badger President Vice President Chris Miller Donna Roden Secretary John McCann **Treasurer**

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Olga Batalov, Jerry Garner, Jen Greene, Kelly Griffin, Denise Huntsman-Griffin, Dean Karras, Al Kline

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Brag table Denise Huntsman-Griffin

& Susan Hopkins

Plant of the Month Pam Badger **Summer/Winter Show** Kelly Griffin Historian Jerry Garner **Grants** Jerry Garner

Library Committee [open]

Michelle Heckathorn & Sara **Exchange Plants/Seeds**

Schell

Annual Sales Chris Miller Auction & Holiday Plants Kelly Griffin

Show Auction Manager [open]

Jim DeForest & Melanie Howe **Monthly Plant Sales**

Monthly Supply Sales Gerry Plaisted

Benefit Drawing Table Allen Clark & Chuck Ramey **Programs** Kelly Griffin

Reception Susan Hopkins & Candy Garner New Member Orientation Patricia Bryan & Jay Crowley Monthly Regalement Kathy Clark & Sandy Wetzel-Smith

Picnic Regalement [open] Coffee in the Garden Coordinators

Julie Dixon & Chuck Ramey

LIAISONS

Balboa Park Desert Garden Susan Hopkins **CSSA Affiliate Rep** Rick Bjorklund **SD Botanic Garden** Phyllis Flechsig SD Botanic Foundation Donna Roden **SD Floral Association** Jeanette Dutton SD Zoo Safari Park, Baja & Old World Gardens

May Fong Ho

Brita Miller **Palomar CS Society Liaison**

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Membership May Fong Ho **Newsletter Editor** Der-shing Helmer Webmaster Jared Petker **Publicity** Christie Lathrop

CONTACT SDCSS membership@sdcss.net

eyf.editor@gmail.com CONTACT EyF EDITOR

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! Spring is here, the change of seasons is upon us and our plants are taking notice. I have been excited to see new growth emerging from the Winter dormant plants, forgotten bulbs showing themselves with beautiful flowers, and the Winter growers heading into their bloom cycle.

Our March meeting was fun, though not as well attended as usual. I am sure some folks were discouraged by the heavy traffic and serious parking problems - there were some special events in the park that day which lead to traffic jams. It is Spring and after the long Covid lockdowns lots of people are enjoying being out and about. You may want to



consider getting to the park early and enjoy the gardens and pre-meeting activities before the meeting. Remember there is additional parking at the old Naval hospital with s shuttle to the park.

Thanks to Jen Greene for her POM talk on the genus Stapelia. Such fascinating plants, such smelly flowers—beautiful slides Jen!

Woody Minnich put on an excellent slide show presentation combining a couple of his trips to Brazil. So many amazing plants, especially numerous rarely seen species. Woody's wonderful photography and fun stories always make for a great show. Woody also did a fine job judging the Brag Table—sharing his knowledge of the plants, judging, and staging. It was interesting and educational.

It seems like we just finished the February show and sale, yet we are already making plans for our next event—June Show and Sale. The April meeting is going to be important in this planning process as the May meeting will be abbreviated and we will be meeting in Room 104 due to scheduling conflicts—details will be in May newsletter.

In April Jerry Garner, a highly experienced plant showman, will be giving a Pre-Meeting Workshop on all you need to know about showing plants. Jerry will be providing tips on staging plants, understanding the categories and classifications, what judges are looking for, as well as answering all your questions. The workshop starts at 11:30 so plan to be there!

On a sad note, Hans Britsch, a long time member, friend, and Fellow of SDCSS passed away on February 25. I first met Hans in 1972 when my husband Lee, and I had a wholesale cactus business in San Francisco. The first time I went to Western Cactus Growers in Vista, I thought I was in heaven—so many beautiful, well grown cactus in long rows in the ground—quite a sight for a succulent newbie from the big city! For more on Hans see the obituary in this newsletter. We have lost a great friend of this hobby, and a very special person.

Be safe, be well, see you on April 9th for our next live meeting.

Pam Badger March 20, 2022

SDCSS APRIL SPEAKER



Join us Saturday, April 9th for our meeting and speaker Buck Hemenway, with his program Survival of the Fattest.

Our program: The documentary "The Survival of the Fattest" (a film by Neil Curry) takes a close look at how succulents plants survive in the wild against all odds. The documentary follows three intrepid plant explorers as they take us into the Karoo for a close look at many South African indigenous plants and explore how and why these plants survive when other plants cannot.

Our speaker: Buck Hemenway and his wife Yvonne are enthusiastic growers of succulent plants. Their one-time hobby turned into the Prickly Palace nursery, which supplied cacti and succulents to the retail nursery trade in Southern California for 15 years. He is Past President and Lifetime Member of both Gates C&SS and San Gabriel Valley C&SS and served for 10 years on the board of Cactus & Succulent Society of America. They are long time members of the British Cactus & Succulent Society and the Succulent Society

of South Africa. Both are "Northern" people. Yvonne is Canadian and Buck was born and raised in Portland Oregon. They traveled to Southern Africa on several occasions, visiting southwest Namibia as well as the Karoos in South Africa. They have a continuing love affair with South Africa and have purchased property there and are living in Calitzdorp in the Klein Karoo. They saw the need for a Succulent Club in their area, so formed the Calitzdorp Succulent Society with the help of several friends there. The Society now produces Vetplantfees which is Afrikaans for Succulent Plant Festival, which attracts thousands of visitors and hungry buyers from all over southern South Africa.



See you at the April 9th meeting!

SDCSS APRIL PRE-MEETING WORKSHOP



For the pre-meeting workshop, we will review the information on plant pre-show preparation that appeared in the February newsletter. Also, as time allows, we will discuss basic plant staging: the combination of plant, pot, rocks, and top dressing.

The pre-meeting workshop begins at 11:30. See you then.

JERRY GARNER

SCHEDULE FOR MONTHLY MEETINGS (TIMES APPROXIMATE)

9:00 - 10:00	Set up
10:00 - 1:00	Plant sales, Library open
11:30- 12:15	Pre-Meeting Workshop (if there is one)
12:30 - 1:00	New member orientation
10:00 - 1:00	Plant exchange open for drop off
10:00	Sale of Benefit Drawing tickets begins
10:00 - 1:00	Bring your Brag Plants; fill out information card (there are 3 categories—Novice, Intermediate and Advanced), learn about plants, get suggestions, win plant bucks
1:00	Start general meeting—introductions and announcements
1:15	Plant of the Month talk
1:30	Brag Plant judging
1:45	Break—get some snacks, buy Benefit Drawing tickets, plant sales
2:05	Benefit Drawing
2:20	Main Speaker presentation
3:20	Plant Exchange drawing
	Clean-up

SPECIAL NOTE FOR MAY 2022: Our May 14th meeting runs from 1-4pm ONLY.

The room will not be available to us until 1pm in May. We'll remind you at the April meeting!

Club meetings are free and open to the public. They are held at Balboa Park monthly, generally on the 2nd Saturday of each month, from 1—4 pm in Room 101 of the Casa del Prado Balboa Park. Refer to the monthly meetings, website, or monthly newsletter for up-to-date news and schedules.

APPLY TO THE NEW SDCSS LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The current Library Committee is in need of new blood. I have rewritten the Job Description for selling the items at our meetings. We also receive collections from time to time and they must be dealt with. Currently we have a person who is willing to do the research for adding new items, someone who can check items in and out and possibly someone to maintain the databases.

We need a Chair to lead the group and others to check books in and out. We also need people who are interested in managing the sale of the books to club members. I will continue on the committee as an advisor. Please let me know if you are interested. See me at a meeting or contact me at 619-990-2051 or c.miller@cox.net.

THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY'S

SUMMER SHOW AND SALE

Sat June 4 & Sun June 5, 2022

Join us for the Annual Summer Show and Sale!

TIMES & DATES

Sales area setup: Fri June 3, 1pm—6pm Showroom setup: Fri June 3, 9am—12:30pm Bring in Show plants: Fri June 3, 1pm—6pm, Sat June 4, 8am—9:30am (out of town participants only)

SATURDAY 9am—11am members only sale (membership card required)

11am—5pm sale open to the public

10am – 3pm show times

SUNDAY 10am—3pm sale open to public

10am-3pm show times

2022 SHOW COMMITTEE

SHOW CHAIR: Dean Karras SALES CHAIR: Chris Miller

HEAD CLERK: Susan Hopkins LUNCHEON: Pam Badger

The show is open to anyone who grows succulent plants, and there is no limit to the number of entries per class or the number of classes entered.

You can pick up show tags early at the April or May meeting, or get them at the show.

Full show rules, judging and award info, plant divisions, classes and categories, as well as tips for displaying your show plants available soon in the April and May newsletter and on our website www.SDCSS.net

THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY P. O. Box 33181, San Diego, Ca 92163-3181, is a public service and educational (nonprofit tax exempt) organization.

EARLY SHOPPING CHANGES

With the new wonderful E-cards for our Membership Cards, the following new rules will be in place for our upcoming Early Shopping Events.

ABOUT: Choose from 5 ways to show your current member status at the entrance for Early Shopping:

- 1. Paper (Membership) card with proper expiration date
- 2. Copy of E-card from your desktop
- 3. E-card image on your cell phone
- 4. Image of your pay-pal receipt on your cell phone
- 5. Proof of joining/renewing at the tent that morning.

IMPORTANT CHANGES:

- 1. If you don't have 1 of the 5 documents to show you're a current member, you won't be able to shop early
- 2. The Welcome tent will no longer have a membership list to check if you are a current member

CANDY GARNER

NEW MEMBER CARD SYSTEM

Your membership card now comes in E-card format!

Every new member as well as renewing member has received an E-card by email with a valid through date.

- o Use at library and early entry for special events such as the yearly Show and Sales.
- o Your card will be emailed within 1 week of receiving your membership dues payment.
- o Image provided in .jpeg format so it can be stored digitally or physically printed



A traditional paper Membership card will be printed for those without email or smart phone. Pick up your card at Welcome Table. Contact membership@sdcss.net if you have any questions.

MAY FONG HO

SHARE YOUR PASSION!

Have you ever read the *Espinas Y Flores* Newsletter 'Plant of the Month' article and thought - "I could do that!" Why not participate by writing a piece for our **Plant of the Month** feature?

Pick a genus or species that interests you, do a little research, find or take a few pictures and create an article to share with the club!

Contact Pam Badger: pambad1@mac.com

SDCSS ONLINE

FACEBOOK:

www.facebook.com/sdcss

TWITTER: SanDiegoCactus

INSTAGRAM: #sdcss

WEBSITE: www.sdcss.net

COFFEE IN THE GARDEN RETURNS!

Coffee in the Garden has been on a Covid hiatus for the past couple years—and now it is back! Some of you may be asking, "what is Coffee in the Garden?" It is a fun and popular event SDCSS has sponsored for many years. Folks who are interested in sharing their garden with other members are invited to host

an open garden event. The host provides drinks and snacks, a garden to explore, and a chance for members to socialize and discuss our favorite topic: succulent plants! Often there are plants for sale as well.

The return of CiG will be Saturday, April 16, 8:30-2:00 at the home of Melanie Howe. Mel has an interesting and eclectic garden that reflects her diverse interests. There will be several vendors with plants and pots for sale. Vendors include Brian Shepard, Christine Vargas, Sue Thomas, Rick Bjorklund, and Mike Fernandez with plants and pottery available for purchase. Cash only, bring a box.

Time and Date: Saturday April 16th 2022, from 8:30am-2:00pm Address: 8151 Doe Point, San Diego 92120 (please park on Hillsdale Dr., not in the cul de sac)

If you are interested in showing off your garden, contact Chuck Ramey at chuckeroast@yahoo.com





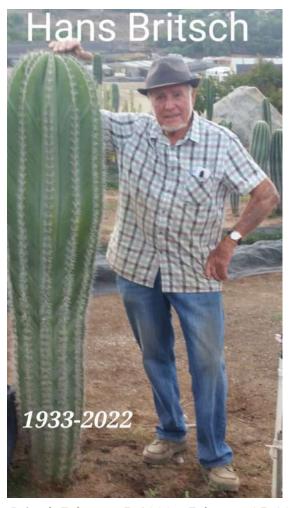
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



SDCSS is once again going to have a booth at the Fair in Del Mar on Friday July 1, 2022. I will need 2-3 volunteers for most of the day. Volunteer participants will receive free entrance to the fair and time off to explore.

Contact me if interested at pambad1@mac.com

REMEMBERING HANS BRITSCH



Hans Britsch February 5, 1933 - February 25, 2022

Like the Alps surrounding the small village in Termin, Switzerland, where he was born, Hans Britsch lived an impressive life. Hans was the last of five children born to Magdelena and Josef Britsch. From an early age, Hans loved plants; he was always the first to find spring wildflowers on the slopes and in the meadows of the Alps. His father having died from a timber-cutting accident when he was only nine months old, Hans developed a strong work ethic at a very young age, tending to his family's cows and selling edelweiss to tourists and soldiers during WWII on the Simplon pass (one of the historic routes of the Orient Express).

Hans was intellectually curious and valued education. He attended an agricultural school in Visp, Valais, followed by an apprenticeship where he learned to graft plants. He then earned a prestigious Swiss Meisterprufung Diploma in horticulture after attending the University at Oschberg.

Hans met the love of his life, Margarethe "Gretl" Maria Berner, in Zurich, Switzerland, on a blind date. Hans was asked to chauffer another couple, and Gretl was invited to join the group so Hans wouldn't feel like a taxi driver. After visiting greenhouses all day, Hans and Gretl fell in love. On September 29, 1962, they were married at Saint Andrew's Catholic Church in Zams, Austria (Gretl's hometown). Their first child, Susanne Magdelena, was born two years later.



In 1964, Hans and Gretl immigrated to California in search of a place with year-round spring weather. Hans arrived first, crossing the Atlantic Ocean by ship with his blue VW Bug in tow. He then drove across the country and settled in Buena Park, a suburb of Los Angeles. Three months later, Gretl and Susie joined him (by airplane). Initially, Hans worked for a landscape company (Valley Crest) during the day, and Gretl worked as a night-shift nurse to provide round-the-clock care for Susie.

In 1966, they happened to meet a Swiss couple who owned the Morgan Wholesale Nursery in Vista, California. Hans and Gretl bought the nursery and renamed it Western Cactus Growers. Hans initially made deliveries along Highway 101 in his VW Bus/Truck. They got their first big break that same year, supplying a well-established supermarket chain, Alpha Beta, with their plants. They also started importing seeds from Europe, mainly from Werner Ubelmann (who offered all of the discoveries from Brazil) and from other places where Hans traveled to collect seeds. Hans took great pride in propagating plants from seed, which reduced

REMEMBERING HANS BRITSCH

endangered species and the environment. By 1967, their second child, Hans Thomas, was born.

Hans and Gretl visited many countries to see cactus and succulents in their natural habitats. In 1976, they traveled to South Africa with Dieter Supthut, Director of the Sukkulenten-Sammlung in Zurich. They also traveled to Brazil with Professor Werner Rauh and Leopoldo Horst to see places where Albert Buining and Horst made important plant discoveries. And they participated in trips organized by the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study (IOS Congresses). They particularly enjoyed IOS trips to the Barranca de Metztitlan in Mexico, to the provinces of Salta and Jujuy in the Andes Mountains of Argentina (where they saw giant Helianthocereus and the woolly Oreocereus), and to the cereus forests and Andes of Venezuela (where they saw snow-white cephalium of Melocactus schatzlii and the M. mazelianus along the Orinoco River). They also took trips to explore plants native to the desert regions of the United States, as well as to Africa, Cuba, Guatemala, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Galapagos Islands, China, Russia, Hungary, and Madagascar.

Hans and Gretl particularly cherished operating Western Cactus with their son, Hans Thomas, for the last 33 of their 56 years in agribusiness. Working side-by-side with their valued employees, they expanded Western Cactus by establishing multiple other companies on more than 100 acres of land across San Diego County.

Hans and Gretl shared their last day of work together on Valentine's Day 2022, in their 60th year of marriage. As with every other day, Hans was first to arrive at 6:30 A.M. to work; that night, he was taken to the hospital by ambulance. In his absence, Hans Thomas and his son, Nico (a UC Berkeley graduate), are committed to growing the business for generations to come-a fulfillment of Hans and Gretl's American dream.

As much as Hans loved his work, he loved his family even more. He immensely enjoyed spending time at family events and holiday gatherings. He faithfully and unconditionally supported his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He also enjoyed being an active member of his community (Road 3A), his civic duties,

wild plant pillaging by plant enthusiasts and protected opportunities to make charitable contributions, and donating endangered plants to organizations such as the San Diego Zoo Safari Park, the San Diego Botanic Gardens, and the Huntington Library in Pasadena.

> As a lifelong devout Catholic, Hans was surrounded by his family when he returned to Our Lord on February 25, 2022, after receiving the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick from Father Gerardo Fernandez. Switzerland had come to California on that day—all of the local mountains were covered with snow. Outside his hospital window. workers were planting a droughttolerant rooftop, and an American flag could be seen flying from a crane. He would have liked that.

The family is enormously grateful for the tender care given to Hans by all of the doctors (Rai, Kosmo, Tolentino, Greenstein, Bertrand de Silva, Aldiwani, Mulvihill, Chelimilla, and Macleay), nurses (Taylor, Toby, Ali, Britney, Geanie, Patty, Rosie, Emma, Jordan, and Irene), and many others at Palomar Medical Center. Though pandemic weary, each provided first-rate, dignified care into his last hours.

Hans is survived by his much-loved wife Gretl; children Susie (husband David) and Hans Thomas (wife Rachel); grandchildren Stephanie (husband Greg), Peter, Hans Joseph, Nicolas (Nico), and Marcos; great-grandchildren Savannah and Cayden & Hudson (identical twins, born on March 10, 2022); and family in Switzerland (including sister Paula).

Hans led an extraordinary life dedicated to his family and his plants. He led with humility and by example, gaining the respect of others through his work ethic, respect and kindness for others, and ability to live each day to its fullest as a loving husband, father, and farmer.



UPCOMING CSSA WEBINARS AND EVENTS

UPCOMING CSSA WEBINAR



Join the CSSA on Saturday, April 2nd at 10:00am for the next in their series of webinars featuring Cactus and Succulent experts from around the world. Next: *Growing Cacti and Succulents From Seed* by Steven Brack.

Click here to register for the Webinar!

Did you know that a few mesembs can flower just 3 months after germination, and some cacti like Mammillaria and Turbinicarpus can flower within about a year? In this presentation, Steven Brack will show you

how easy and rewarding it is to grow cacti and succulents from seed. Seed growing is a great way to propagate the plants that we love. It displays the variation and different characteristics found among seedlings. Rare species are sometimes only available through seeds. Another aspect of the seed growing is learning about seed production using your own plants. When you dive into seed growing, you can produce extra plants that you can trade with friends or sell.

FIRST NATIONAL CSSA PHOTO CONTEST

"The Artistry of Cacti and Succulents"

It is time to get out your cell phones, cameras or other photography devices. The Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) is holding its first ever national photo contest. All CSSA members are eligible to participate. There are two divisions; adult (16 years and older), and youth (younger than 16 years). Prizes will be awarded in each of the divisions.

Prizes: The following prizes will be awarded to the winners in both the adult and youth categories.



First Place: \$100.00 Gift certificate from B&H Photo – Video, publication of the image in **To the Point**, and an 8 x 10 inch (approximate) print of the image.

Second Place: \$25.00 credit toward purchase at the CSSA Seed Depot, Publication of the image in **To the Point**, and an 8 x 10 inch (approximate) print of the image.

Third Place: Publication of the image in **To the Point**, and an 8 x 10 inch (approximate) print of the image.

Honorable Mention: Publication of the image in To the Point.

Submission deadline is Midnight, May 1, 2022 PM PDT. Find the full contest rules and information here.

PLANT OF THE MONTH ARTICLE: GARDENING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC



garden after ground-cover removal (see the cover of this issue for the "before" picture)

Pam Badger

As you likely remember, in March 2020 many things came to a screeching halt. For me, this meant one part-time job moved online, and another went away completely—I was no longer running around East County teaching yoga all week. I was actually glad to have life slow down; I am an introvert at heart, so staying home is no problem. This new-found time gave me the opportunity to spend time exploring my garden and enjoying the changes of Spring. The more time I spent, the less satisfied I became with the way the garden was looking.

This landscape was created on a barren slope 35 years ago and had been through numerous changes over the years. The original trees planted for shade in order to establish more exotic and valued species were removed as Euphorbias, Palms, Cactus, Cycads, Alluadias, Agaves, Aloes, and others grew to be large specimens. Others had actually become more like invasive species; overtaking and burying desirable plants. One area in particular started to bug me;

beautiful large Gold Barrels (*Echinocereus grusonii*), Shaving Brush Tree (*Pseudobombax ellipticum*), Fouquieria diguetii amongst others were disappearing under a deep carpet of succulent ground cover. The "Golden Tooth Aloe (*Aloe distans*) had also begun to take over—climbing over Gold Barrels and up into a large palm tree. It was time for an intervention. I took a clawed hoe-type tool to the ground cover, and a power saw to the Aloe, and didn't stop for the next year and a half. One project lead to another until about 75% of the landscape had been reworked. And I'm not done yet—a gardeners work is never done.

At our meeting on April 9 I will present a brief slide show documenting this transformation—I never had so much fun working so hard. I believe that gardening kept many people sane through these difficult times, and I am very grateful to have this garden with the challenges and peace it brings me.

PAM BADGER

PLANT OF THE MONTH ARTICLE: GARDENING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC





"The Beast" of an aloe plant (left) and the much cleaner aftermath of removal and replanting (right)

Pam Badger





garden slope, before and after

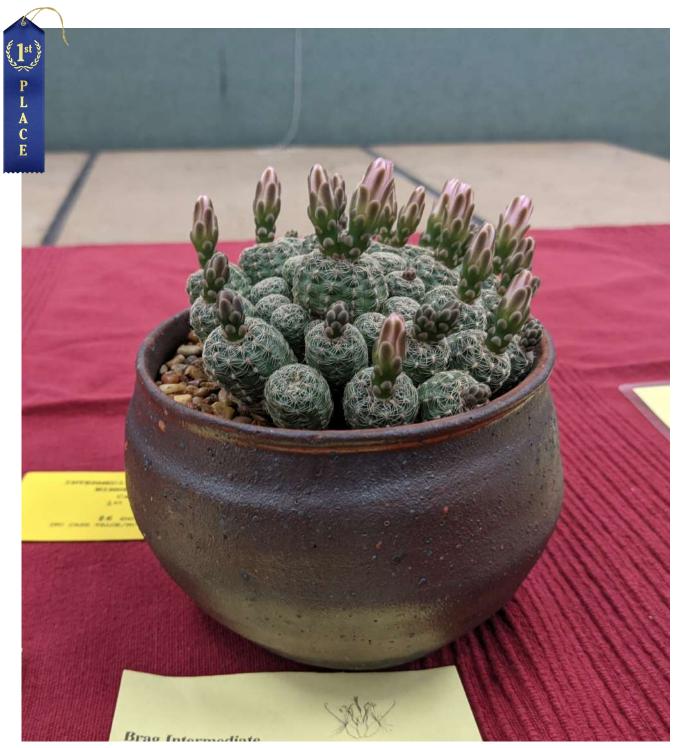
Pam Badger

MARCH 2022 BRAG TABLE WINNERS GALLERY

We asked SDCSS members to bring their best plants to share for the November Meeting's Brag Table, judged by our wonderful guest speaker Woody Minnich!

Bring in your best plants to our April 9th brag table for a chance to win club bucks and bragging rights!

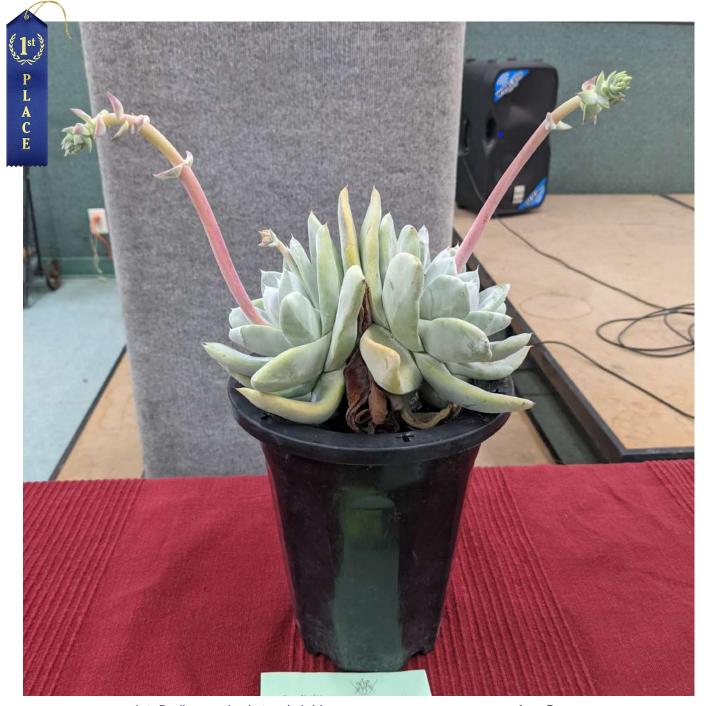
MARCH BRAG TABLE RESULTS: INTERMEDIATE CACTUS



1st: Gymnocalycium bruchii

Chris Miller

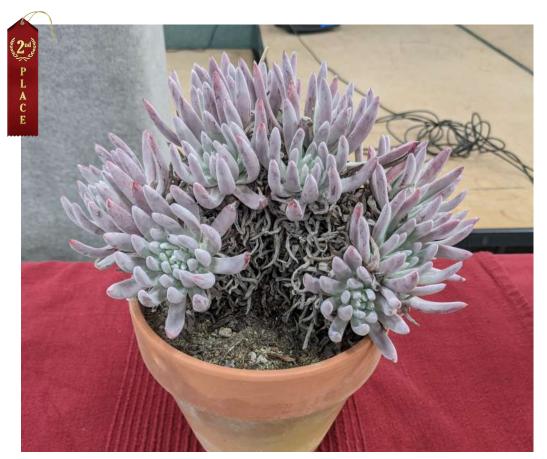
MARCH BRAG TABLE RESULTS: NOVICE SUCCULENT



1st: Dudleya pachyphytum hybrid

Jose Ramos

MARCH BRAG TABLE RESULTS: NOVICE SUCCULENT



2nd: Dudleya sp.

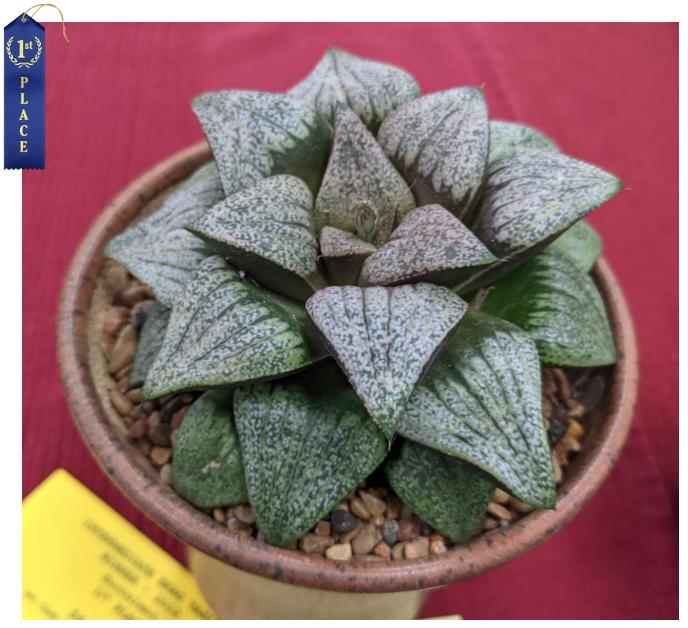
Jose Ramos



3rd: Agave titanota 'Sabertooth Tiger'

Chris Garcia

MARCH BRAG TABLE RESULTS: INTERMEDIATE SUCCULENT



1st: Haworthia splendens x H. emelyae

Chris Miller

MARCH BRAG TABLE RESULTS: INTERMEDIATE SUCCULENT





Chris Miller



3rd: Haworthia truncata

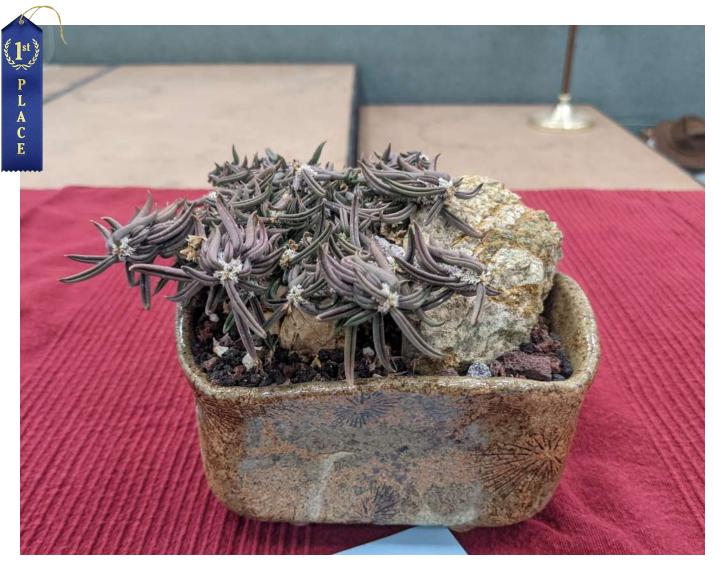
Chris Miller



3rd: Euphorbia inermis

Chris Garcia

MARCH BRAG TABLE RESULTS: ADVANCED SUCCULENT



1st: Euphorbia decaryi x E. cylindrafolia

Pam Badger