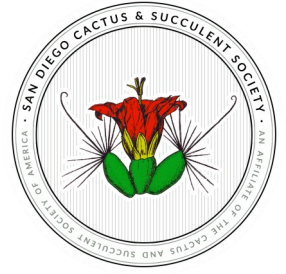


ESPINAS Y FLORES



VOL. 61, No. 10
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NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
AN AFFILIATE OF THE CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA



OCTOBER SPEAKER // THE STORIES BENEATH THE PLANTS WE LOVE //
UPCOMING SDCSS HOLIDAY PARTY // ...and more



ON THE COVER

A spooky tableau

Photo by Chuck Ramey

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UPCOMING SDCSS SCHEDULE

OUR NEXT MEETING

October 10th

SDCSS NURSERY CRAWL EVENT

November 14th

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I heard the picnic was a great success—and I'm sorry I missed it! With **73 attendees**, it was certainly well attended. Considering the heat we've been having, that's an especially impressive turnout! And, as always, Kate Sessions Park seems to never disappoint.

A huge thank-you to Georgia Kenney, who once again did an excellent job organizing everything and keeping all the many details on track. We had so many people contribute to making the picnic a success, and I'd like to recognize everyone who helped but here are the ones I know about:

- **Jared Petker** for setting up the online ticket purchasing system and for donating 25 beautiful gift plants.
- **Olga Batalov** for receiving the processed registrations and creating the attendee roster.
- **Chuck Ramey** for bringing tables and umbrellas.
- **Rita Lunceford** for donating another 25 gift plants.
- **Vicki Hoffman** for donating 60–65 staging rocks and bringing an additional table.
- **Emily Weaver** for organizing and coordinating all the games.
- **Georgia Kenney** for supplying tablecloths, tape, Sharpies, name tags, taco-cart tickets, a sun canopy, clipboard, pen, and the attendance roster—and for helping Denise Huntsman-Griffin with check-in.

And a very special thank-you to **Brian Shepard**, who donated a beautiful *Copiapoa* that he had grown for many years to be auctioned. It brought in a whopping **\$575** to support our conservation efforts! What a wonderful contribution.

Great job, everyone, and thank you for making the picnic such a fun and successful event!

I was away traveling and unfortunately missed the picnic. Hopefully, at some point I can share with you some of the interesting things we discovered in the land down under. It was a long and travel-intensive trip, but I'll save more about that for another time!

Looking Ahead: our **October 10th** meeting will be our last regular meeting of the year, and we have a great speaker lined up. **Dylan Zoller** will be presenting on **Brazil**. Dylan has not presented for SDCSS before, but he is a wonderful new speaker with lots of fascinating things to share. Be sure to



mark **October 10th** on your calendar—you won't want to miss this one!

In **November**, we'll be doing a **nursery crawl on November 14th**, since we don't have an allocated meeting space that month.

And then comes our **Holiday Gathering on December 12th**! This is always a fun event, with catered food, a plant swap, gift plants, and, of course, great food and wonderful friends. Please sign up either online or in person at the October meeting.

Welcome to Fall! It's that wonderful time of year when the seasons begin to shift. Soon, our winter growers will be waking up, while the summer growers start slowing down, going leafless, and preparing for their seasonal rest.

As always, **pay attention to what your plants are telling you!** They know what season it is.

See you all very soon at our October meeting!

Kelly Griffin

September 26, 2026





Photos from the picnic. We all had a wonderful time. Thanks for the photos, **Donna Roden!**



**OCTOBER 10TH
SPEAKER
DYLAN ZOLLER
“JEWELS OF
THE BRAZILIAN
HIGHLANDS”**

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Dylan Zoller is a photographer, explorer, plantsman, and horticulturist at Sherman Library & Gardens who is especially focused on plants from the Bromeliaceae family. His passion led him to join both local and international bromeliad societies and begin a career in public horticulture at age 18.

He has conducted expeditions across Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Guatemala, Brazil, and Papua New Guinea to photograph and document rare and localized cacti, bromeliads, and orchids. He is currently pursuing a degree in biology.

ABOUT OUR SPEAKER TOPIC

During the past few years Dylan has spent a considerable amount of time traveling great distances across the Brazilian countryside photographing and documenting many unusual species of bromeliads/cacti in their natural habitats. He has devoted much time in locating poorly understood species for which records are few. In a country so large, such a goal means long, often challenging trips to remote locales.

In this presentation he hopes to provide an introduction to the unbelievably varied landscapes of the country and a

selection of the many fantastic succulents that inhabit them. From the expansive and semi-arid Serra do Espinhaço in Bahia and Minas Gerais, to the granite massifs (called inselbergs) scattered across the domain of the lush Atlantic Rainforest, you will hopefully gain insight as to why Brazil is one of the powerhouses of cacti and bromeliad diversity.



OUR PLANT OF THE MONTH TOPIC

Join us at 1am, just before Dylan's talk, for a light-hearted Plant of the Month presentation called "Rooted: The Stories Beneath the Plants We Love", presented by Jared Petker. Catch a sneak preview of this fun subject in this month's newsletter.

[SEE YOU ON OCTOBER 10TH, 2026!](#)

CHUCK RAMEY'S *SPOOKTACULAR* COFFEE IN THE GARDEN

Who: Chuck Ramey

Date: Saturday, October 24th

Time: 9am-noon -or- 1pm-4pm

>>> **SPACE IS VERY LIMITED! PLEASE RESERVE YOUR SPOT BY CLICKING HERE** <<<

Directions: Normal Heights Elementary School is at 3750 Ward Road, San Diego, CA 92116 I will have signs at Cherokee and Ward Street pointing to the school and which parking lot to use.

Parking info: Parking will be at a premium. Three blocks away I will be using the elementary school's lower parking lot and my nieces will be shuttling people back-and-forth. Shuttling will start at around 8:45. It is three blocks and you're welcome to walk if you want to. To contact Chuck/ communicate a shuttle need, please call 619-889-8832

I bought my house in August of 1996 and have been here 30 years. The property was hard-packed concrete soil with Brugmansias and dead grass with a eucalyptus tree in the middle of the backyard. I've spent years tilling, mulching and adding sand and soil. Over the years I've changed it into an antebellum type garden (of course it didn't last long in the heat and dryness). Then I planted the whole back yard with Bromeliads and dry understory plants. With the growth of the two trees I have in the back yard and my neighbors tree the ground has become nothing but roots and I'm unable to plant in the ground anymore so everything is now in pots. I also have an extensive cactus and succulent collection that I can't wait to share with the club. Being that this is October, of course I will have my Halloween decorations displayed inside and out.

Pete of Root Down pots and Sue Thomas will be selling there amazing pots and plants at this Coffee in the Garden. **Make sure to sign up early to secure your spot!**



ROOTED: THE STORIES BENEATH THE PLANTS WE LOVE

BY JARED PETKER



Euphorbia “not” *erlangeri*
A plant of mystery

I often browse photos I’ve taken of my plants over the years, do you? I marvel in my forgetfulness. I see plants which now fill large intricate ceramic pottery of presence. Plants which were the size of a finger a few years ago. I smile.

I also see plants which are no longer here. I grow sad.

I’ve pondered the feelings of remorse from losing a plant I loved. In most cases, a new one is attainable. It’s a bundle of plant cells, forming a species I can find again, right?

And yet, the feelings of guilt are near impossible to scrub away.

As with the people that surround our own lives, our plants come with history. Our plants have beginnings which precede our relationship with them. Our plants grow with us, as we grow with them.

In this **Plant of the Month** talk, I’ll share stories of my own plants, their origins, and the effect they’ve had on me. I would appreciate you bringing a plant or two to our brag table with its own story for you to share as well.

JARED PETKER



Euphorbia atrox
A plant with history

November 14th! Save the Date, because it's the...

SDCSS NOVEMBER NURSERY CRAWL

This November, instead of a standard meeting, we'll be throwing a **San Diego-wide Nursery Crawl!** Visit one of the great nurseries on our list or visit all of them... it's up to you! Nurseries will offer plants, pots, special event-only pricing and incentives, guest vendors, and more. It's a perfect time to find a lovely winter-growing plant ahead of the holidays as a gift for a friend...or maybe just for yourself!

The following vendors are confirmed, with more vendors and details to come in the next newsletter!

Nursery	Address	Hours	Special Offers
Botanic Wonders	2705 Sarver Ln, San Marcos, CA 92069	8:00 AM–2:00 PM	10% off for all club members and a Bargain Bench with highly discounted plants
Desert Theater Nursery	Next door to Botanic Wonders	9:00 AM–2:00 PM	-
PW Plants	404 Lor Lar Ln, Ramona, CA	9:00 AM–2:00 PM	-
Tina Zucker & other vendors	552 Seabright Lane, Solana Beach CA	8:30 AM–12:30 PM	20% off if paid cash. Discounts on pottery and 15% off with Pretty Odd Plants
Hula Tropicals	31848 Aquaduct Rd, Bonsall, CA 92003	9:00 AM–3:00 PM	Free Adenium with purchase
Mike's Plants	6840 Veronica Ave, SD CA 92115	9:00 AM–2:00 PM	Free seedling with purchase
DR Cactus Succulents	1850 Warmlands Ave, Vista, CA 92084	9:00 AM–2:00 PM	-
Hidden Agave	TBD	TBD	Free plant with purchase
Ace Mega Succulents	8067 Haven Dr, Lemon Grove CA 91945	9:00 AM–5:00 PM	-
LA Succulents	1226 Christy Ave, Lake View Terrace CA 9134	9:00 AM–4:00 PM	10% off everything for members of SDCSS

The SDCSS monthly newsletter welcomes all contributions from its members!

If you have a personal 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



SAN DIEGO
Cactus & Succulent Society

GET READY FOR OUR DEC 12TH HOLIDAY PARTY

10:30-11:30: Check-in socializing, talking plants, checking out the gift plants, gift exchange plants, and auction items. We will also have a short meeting to formally elect our officers for 2027.

12:00: Catered lunch served (vegan options available), pot-luck desserts (please bring one to share), and gift exchange.

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

2:00: Silent and Live auctions

MENU

Standard option: Oven-roasted turkey breast, baked ham, homemade bread dressing, mashed potatoes with gravy, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole, traditional green salad with either ranch dressing or balsamic vinaigrette, rolls and butter, plus potluck desserts, wine, coffee, and tea.

Vegan option: Vegan ancient grain bowl (quinoa and farro with roasted vegetables, avocado and balsamic glaze).

MORE INFO

Potluck desserts: Bring your favorite dessert to share! Please bring a serving utensil if needed.

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. 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.

Silent auction: There will be a variety of items donated, along with 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 donated plants and items for a Live Auction. This event is lots of fun and the proceeds will be contributed towards the conservation of endangered cacti and succulents.

Tickets available until *November 30th
\$35 for members and \$40 for non-members
in-person at the October meeting
 or online at this link on our website.



2027 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 2027 will be gifted, first-come-first-served, to holiday party goers... another great reason to pick up your ticket now for the December festivities!