

VOLUME 58 • NUMBER 09 • SEPTEMBER 2023

ESPINAS Y FLORES



SUCCULENT EUPHORBIA OF THE USA: DOUBLE-FEATURE
AUGUST BRAG TABLE RESULTS • UPCOMING EVENTS & more!

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



ON THE COVER

Euphorbia radicans inflorescence
 Photo © 2022 by Gerardo Manzanarez-Villasana,
 usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

TABLE OF CONTENTS

President’s Message pg 3-4

Upcoming speaker pg 5

Plant of the Month double feature pgs 6-10

August Brag Table results pgs 11-25

SDCSS SCHEDULE

Our next in-person meeting:

September 9th

Upcoming meeting:

October 14th

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President Pam Badger
Vice President Chris Miller
Secretary Olga Batalov
Treasurer John McCann

New Member Orientation Patricia Bryan & Jay Crowley
Monthly Regalement Sandy Wetzel-Smith
Picnic Regalement [open]
Coffee in the Garden Coordinators
 Julie Dixon & Chuck Ramey

DIRECTORS

Pat Bryan, Candy Garner, Jerry Garner, Jen Greene,
 Kelly Griffin, Dean Karras, and Jared Petker

LIAISONS

Balboa Park Desert Garden Susan Hopkins
CSSA Affiliate Rep Rick Bjorklund
SD Botanic Garden Phyllis Flechsig
SD Botanic Foundation Lynn Elliot
SD Floral Association Jeanette Dutton
SD Zoo Safari Park, Baja & Old World Gardens
 May Fong Ho
Palomar CS Society Liaison Brita Miller

COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES

Conservation Herb Stern
Brag table Denise Huntsman-Griffin & Susan Hopkins
Plant of the Month Pam Badger
Summer/Winter Show [open]
Historian Jerry Garner
Grants Jerry Garner
Library Committee Luis Gonzalez
Exchange Plants/Seeds Michelle Heckathorn
Annual Sales Chris Miller
Auction & Holiday Plants Kelly Griffin
Show Auction Manager [open]
Monthly Plant Sales Chris Miller
Benefit Drawing Table Allen Clark & Chuck Ramey
Programs Kelly Griffin
Reception Susan Hopkins & Candy Garner

MEMBERSHIP, BUSINESS, & PUBLICITY

Membership May Fong Ho
Business Manager Donna Roden
Newsletter Editor Der-shing Helmer
Webmaster Jared Petker
Publicity Christie Lathrop

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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings, friends and fellow succulent lovers, I hope you all weathered the most significant tropical storm that I have been witness to in my almost 45 years in San Diego County. Luckily for us, Hurricane Hilary lost much of her power before visiting, yet left us plenty of wonderful summer rain. In Spring Valley, I recorded at least 2 inches in 24 hours! I went out the next day to take advantage of the moist earth to plant some new acquisitions—several *Dudleya* getting ready to start their growing season, a few cacti, and an interesting trailing sage, for it's blue color. A gardener's work is never done, thankfully!



I was very disappointed to miss the August meeting; the side effects of the COVID booster I got on Friday left me with zero energy. Being a fan of Euphorbias, I had been looking forward to **Jared Petker's** talk—thanks to **Chris Miller** for sending me pics as well as running the meeting in my place. I heard there was a good turnout, so I hope everyone had a good time.

As you may already know, our September meeting will *not* include all of our normal activities, and **we will be meeting in Room 104**. We won't have access to the room until the conclusion of the Bromeliad Society meeting at about 12:30. The meeting will include a **Plant of the Month** presentation by our newsletter editor, **Der-shing Helmer**; if you have been there for her talks in the past, you know we are in for a treat—always well put together and fascinating. We will also have a **Brag Plant** table, so bring a couple of your beauties and win some acclaim and Plant Bucks! The main speaker is new to SDCSS so that is always exciting—see details elsewhere in this newsletter. There will be **NO** plant exchange, sales, or benefit drawing due to space and time limitations.

If you are concerned about mid-day parking in the Park, I encourage you to make a day of it despite the abbreviated meeting. Come early and enjoy the many pleasures of Balboa Park. There are **two wonderful succulent gardens** to explore and see how they have flourished with the summer rain. If you have never visited the 'hidden treasure' of the **Kate O. Sessions** succulent garden, tucked away behind the Balboa Park Club and the Puppet Theater, it is worth finding and exploring (see photos on next page). Recently, there has been much work the restoration and documentation of this historical garden, and on the 24th I had the pleasure of meeting with some Park people to help with plant identification; I had not been there for many years, and it was great to see it being cared for. There is also the better-known garden across Park Blvd which also has had work done with expansion down into the canyon. Another option is the Zoo with it's wonderful collection of plants—if you have not see the African Rocks exhibit, it is a 'must see' for the large and ever expanding collection of African succulents. I hear they may have cool animals as well, though I am always too busy visiting my favorite plants to notice.

After exploring, an early lunch at one of the numerous Park eateries will make for the perfect morning before coming to our meeting which will start at 1:00. Hope to see you there.

Coming up: Our last 'regular' meeting of the year will be in October, with all of our normal activities, including sales, benefit drawing, plant exchange, and open library.

As our November meeting would be on the 11th and the Park will be closed for Veteran's Day, we will be having a **nursery crawl**, so mark your calendars and look for details in future newsletters.

See you on September 9th, Room 104, 12:30pm...meeting starts at 1pm.
Be well!

Pam Badger

August 25, 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



photos from the Kate Sessions succulent garden

Pam Badger

SDCSS SEPTEMBER SPEAKER



Rauh with *Tillandsia rauhii* v. *longispica*

Join us **Saturday, September 9th** for our awesome guest speaker **Pamela Koide Hyatt** on “**The work of Werner Rauh**”

Our Speaker Topic: “During a recent presentation to a Bromeliad Society group, I mentioned the name of the late Professor Werner Rauh. Immediately, someone in the audience asked “who is that?” This came as a surprise to me, as I have always considered him the godfather of bromeliads. So this is a fitting time to present a new program about his life and important work with bromeliads. He was the director at the Heidelberg Botanical Garden and Herbarium for several decades. Prior to his retirement, he undertook more than 36 expeditions, mainly to South and Central America, as well as to southern Africa and Madagascar. This program will discuss his wonderful work and contribution to the world of bromeliads.

“When Werner Rauh died, he left behind 78 field books with a total of 8,812 hand-written pages, now archived in Bonn, Germany. There is now a Werner

Rauh Heritage project creating a relational database to store the heterogeneous information found in these field books, as well as to link the information to actual taxonomy and to the garden’s existing database, the living collection, and numerous plant type specimen materials.”

About Our Speaker: Pamela Koide Hyatt, has been exploring and growing Bromeliads, with an emphasis on Tillandsias for more than half her life. Since starting Bird Rock Tropicals in 1981, Pamela has traveled extensively throughout Mexico, Central and South America in search of tillandsias. During these travels she has discovered more than a dozen species new to science as well as many more natural hybrids. Experiencing plants in habitat and growing for more than 35 years gives her a unique insight into this amazing genus.



Pam with her hybrid *Tillandsia* ‘Samantha’

About Our Pre-meeting topic:

September’s pre-meeting topic will be on two species of North American succulent euphorbia. Find the article about these species in this issue of the newsletter!

See you at the September 9th meeting!

PLANT OF THE MONTH DOUBLE FEATURE

SUCCULENT EUPHORBIA OF THE USA PART I
EUPHORBIA MISERA



Euphorbia misera, leafless

© 2020 by Cristian A. D. & Meling L., usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

Euphorbia! Seems like everyone's talking about them. When you think of Euphorbia, you might imagine one of the many of the species we admire in our monthly meetings... medusoid or shrubby or columnar, spiny or smooth, latex-filled, and hailing from faraway locales like the Middle East or throughout the African continent. But you might be surprised to find that we've got a few members of the succulent Euphorbia right in our own backyards! In this article, I'll touch on one local semi-succulent species and one succulent tuberous species from a neighboring state that you might find a new appreciation for.

EUPHORBIA MISERA

We'll start with a semi-succulent Euphorbia from our own county. The San Diego native Cliff Spurge, *Euphorbia misera*, is a semi-succulent shrub found along the San Diego coast. Its range stretches from the Channel Islands all the way down through southern Baja California Peninsula, mostly on coastal bluffs and mesas. For the sake of pointing out a weird factoid, there's also a population far inland at White Water Canyon, Riverside. But for the most part, you can expect to see this plant by the shore.

PLANT OF THE MONTH DOUBLE FEATURE



Euphorbia misera erect form from Ensenada, Baja CA.
© 2020 by Cristian A. D. & Meling L., usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist



Euphorbia misera prostrate/spread out over a cliff due to exposure to winds
© 2021 by Mark Berninger, usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist



Euphorbia misera, local red gland form
© 2022 by Bonnie Nickel, usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist



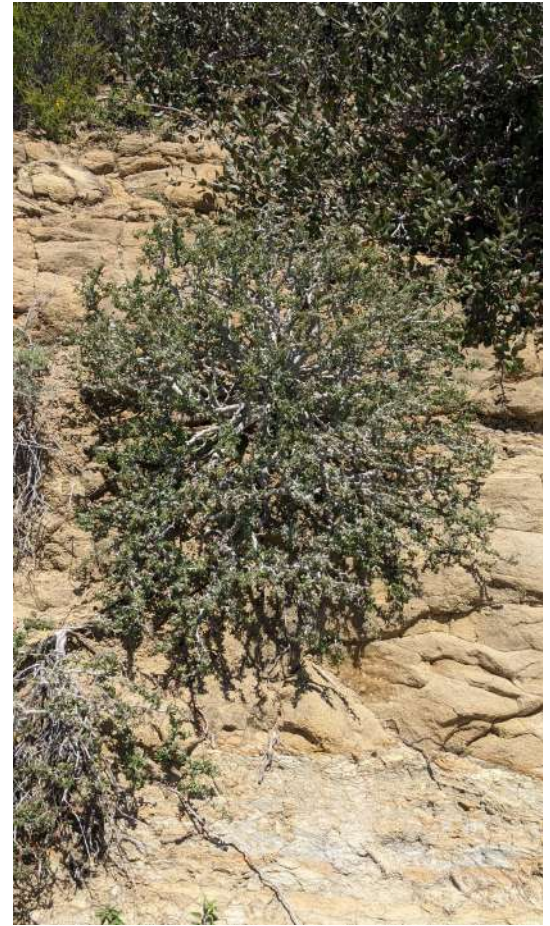
Euphorbia misera, yellow gland form
© 2022 by Ron Vanderhoff, usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

PLANT OF THE MONTH DOUBLE FEATURE

How will you know one when you see it? *E. misera* is identifiable by its gnarly smooth gray branches, its hairy folded leaves, and its minute white cyathia with five nectar glands--these are generally red, sometimes yellow, but I've only seen the red flowers in our locality. The plant can stand erect or may be prostrate, draped dramatically over the bluffs in areas that sustain a constant breeze. The branches are somewhat rubbery and flexible, and like all Euphorbia, will leak a noxious white latex when broken.

Euphorbia misera employs the succulent strategy of dropping leaves when it gets too stressed, which in our area usually means during the hottest parts of the year. Its Latin species name, "*misera*," refers to its "miserable, wretched" appearance when not in leaf... guess we'll have to agree to disagree on that one. I enjoy going *misera*-spotting in the summer months. The stark, sculptural mounds of branches nestled amongst the more persistent foliage is a compelling view of this plant, and certainly worth a look! But for the lush version, check it out in winter.

Flower-wise, *Euphorbia misera* "blooms" 9 months out of the year, which makes it very easy to see this plant in "flower." Cyathia grow from the axils of the plant, and you'll often find cyathium in various stages of development, including fully pollinated flowers with exserted trilobal ovary or fruit hanging out of the involucre.



Euphorbia misera on a cliff Der-shing Helmer



Euphorbia misera cyathia and seed pods
© 2022 by Bonnie Nickel, usage by CC
BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

In our area, you can reliably find excellent specimens of *Euphorbia misera* in habitat at Cabrillo National Monument growing right next to other great local succulents like *Dudleya pulverulenta*, *Duleya edulis*, and *Agave shawii*. If you take the coastal trail headed downslope, you'll find large plants to your right on any exposed and sunny cliff-faces. This plant loves clinging to rocky slopes, vertical cliff faces, and coastal bluffs, and in many spots you'll be able to view the roots of plants wending and threading through the cliff faces, often 20ft or more away from the aboveground portion of the plant.

And the big question: can we grow this species here in San Diego? The short answer is: yes! As you might expect from the info provided above, this plant will benefit from a slope, great drainage, and full sun exposure. It also does much better in areas nearer to the coast, but can certainly be grown inland with those considerations in mind. Being semi-succulent (ie a plant with limited water storage capacity), expect to water this plant a bit more than you would your fully succulent Euphorbia species. This species also makes an excellent winter-blooming plant to submit to our Winter Show and Sale...yet another reason to cultivate this plant at home!

PLANT OF THE MONTH DOUBLE FEATURE



SUCCULENT EUPHORBIA OF THE USA PART II
EUPHORBIA RADIANS

Euphorbia radians with radiating bracts

© 2019 by Oscar González, usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

EUPHORBIA RADIANS

While I researched succulent Euphorbia species of the USA, I was inundated with herbaceous spurge species that, to be frank, all had a bit of a similar weedy look. Suddenly, I came across a photo of a showy flower that took my breath away, called *Euphorbia radians*, aka the Sun Spurge. To my surprise, it was also a succulent! To be honest, I don't know too much about this species, but I've done my best to share what I could find with you all!

Euphorbia radians is indeed a neighbor of ours, with populations in Arizona, Texas, as well as throughout northern and central Mexico. This perennial Euphorbia can be found in a variety of habitats including oak forests, pine forests, cloud forests, grassland, tropical forests, and xerophytic scrub. Within these habitats, it can be found out in the open or hidden in undergrowth --a very adaptable plant.



Euphorbia radians tuber © 2023 by Gerardo Escobar, usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

PLANT OF THE MONTH DOUBLE FEATURE

What most will notice first about this plant are the whimsical, gorgeous inflorescence, which cluster several cyathia together onto one stalk. Working from the outside in, the cyathia display well-developed and showy white-to-pink bracts that radiate outwards from the center like the spokes of a wheel (the source of its species name). Next, you'll notice the 5 glands ringed by white, with a red interior. Inside, the female flowers have a typical trilobed style, but the pollen of the male flowers is bright red, as compared to the typical yellow found in the majority of *Euphorbia* species. The overall effect is high contrast and stunning.

The stem of the plant is innocuous, as are the lanceolate leaves. Underground, this plant hides a moniliform (bead-like) tuberous root system that can grow several inches in length, and which is reportedly edible. This plant seems to be fairly cryptic in its dormant season during the hotter months, but bursts back onto the scene with its flowers on display for several months in winter and spring.

Is this plant easy to grow? That question remains unanswered for now, as I've never seen this plant in cultivation. But with Arizona just a few hours drive away, it might be worth heading out to take a look at this stunning succulent *Euphorbia* in person!

DER-SHING HELMER

SOURCES CITED

- Rivera, Jaime & Perez Sato, Juan Antonio & Alcántara-Salinas, Graciela & Vargas, Abel & Cházaro-Basáñez, Miguel. (2020). The great *Euphorbia radians* Benth. 16. 29-34.
- <https://www.cnpssd.org/chapter-blog/2021/9/5/know-your-rare-plants-cliff-spurge-euphorbia-misera>
- [https://calscape.org/Euphorbia-misera-\(Cliff-Spurge\)](https://calscape.org/Euphorbia-misera-(Cliff-Spurge))



Euphorbia radians showing seed pods and its red pollen © 2019 by Alexis López Hernández, usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist



Euphorbia radians inflorescence without bracts

© 2023 by user "fabrice82", usage by CC BY-NC 4.0 via iNaturalist

AUGUST 2023 BRAG TABLE WINNERS GALLERY

SDCSS members came through and shared lovely winter plants at the August Meeting's Brag Table, judged by Brian Kemble.

Thanks for participating in the brag table! The Brag Table takes place every meeting. Novice entrants have a great chance of winning club bucks, so why not give it a try? We'd love to see your plants!

BRAG TABLE: NOVICE SUCCULENT



1st: *Dorstenia gigas*

Luis Gonzalez

BRAG TABLE: NOVICE SUCCULENT



2nd: *Euphorbia polygona* var. *anoplia* Luis Gonzalez



3rd: *Cyphostemma juttae* Luis Gonzalez

BRAG TABLE: INTERMEDIATE SUCCULENT



No grower info provided!

BRAG TABLE: INTERMEDIATE SUCCULENT

1st
P
L
A
C
E



1st: *Drimia haworthiodes*
Joan Herskowitz



BRAG TABLE: INTERMEDIATE SUCCULENT



2nd: *Sempervivum arachnoideum*

Miriam Parent



3rd: *Haworthiopsis coarctata*

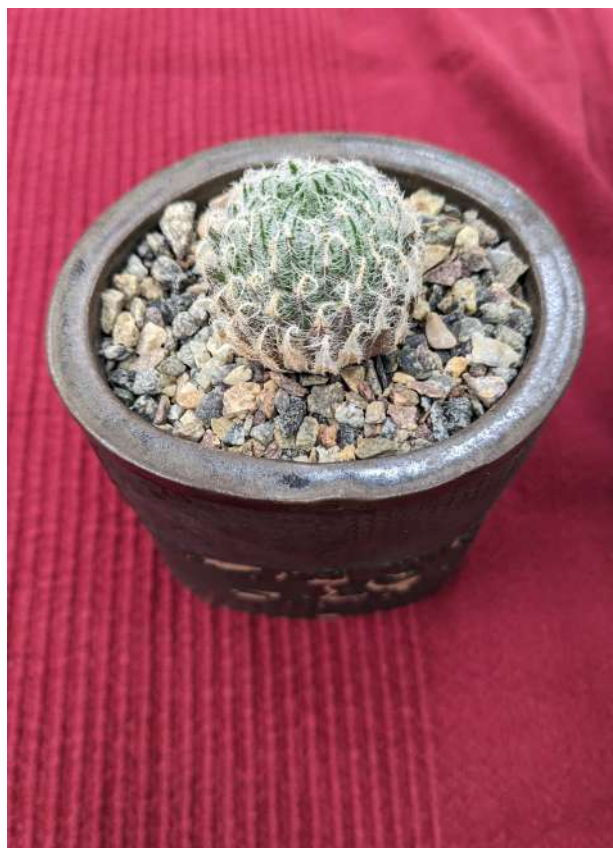
Miriam Parent

BRAG TABLE: INTERMEDIATE SUCCULENT



Euphorbia awashensis

Jared Petker



Haworthia bolusii

Suzy Foran



Delosperma echinatum

Pete Hagopian



Billbergia 'Novena'

Suzy Foran

BRAG TABLE: ADVANCED SUCCULENT



1st: *Pseudolithos cubiformis*

Grow Margo



2nd: *Aeonium* cv. 'Pink Witch'

Grow Margo

BRAG TABLE: ADVANCED SUCCULENT



2nd: *Euphorbia abdelkuri* cv. 'Damask'

Grow Margo



3rd: *Sansevieria elliptica*

Candy Garner

BRAG TABLE: ADVANCED SUCCULENT



Echeveria sp.

Naomi Orosz



Mestoklema sp.

Candy Garner



Pseudolithos caput-viperae

Grow Margo

BRAG TABLE: ADVANCED SUCCULENT



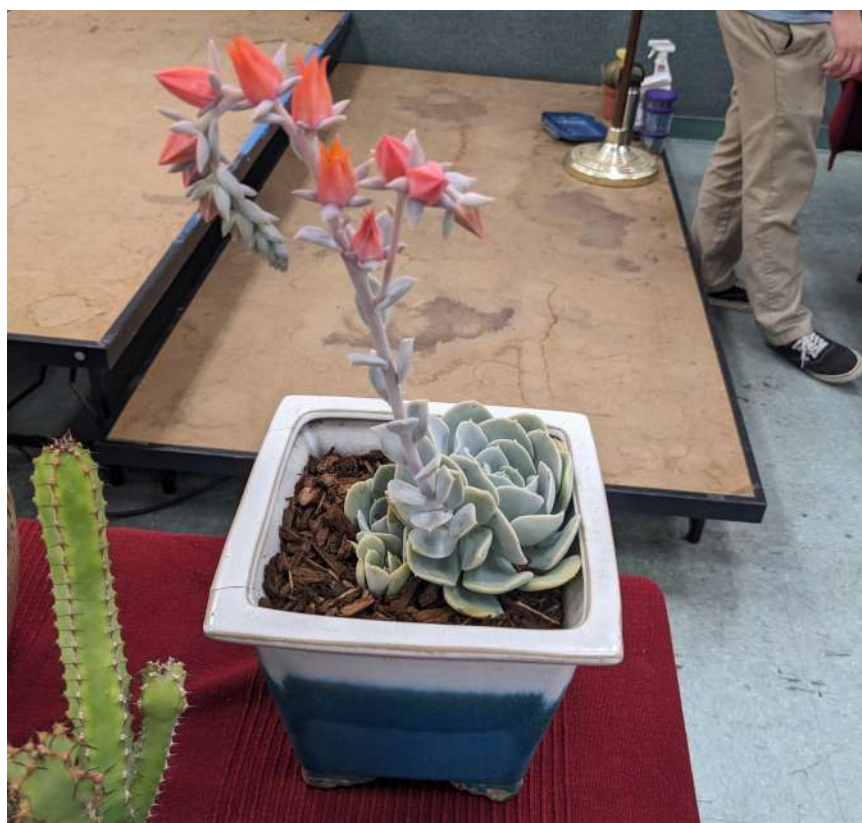
Euphorbia x bottae

Dean Karras



Unknown

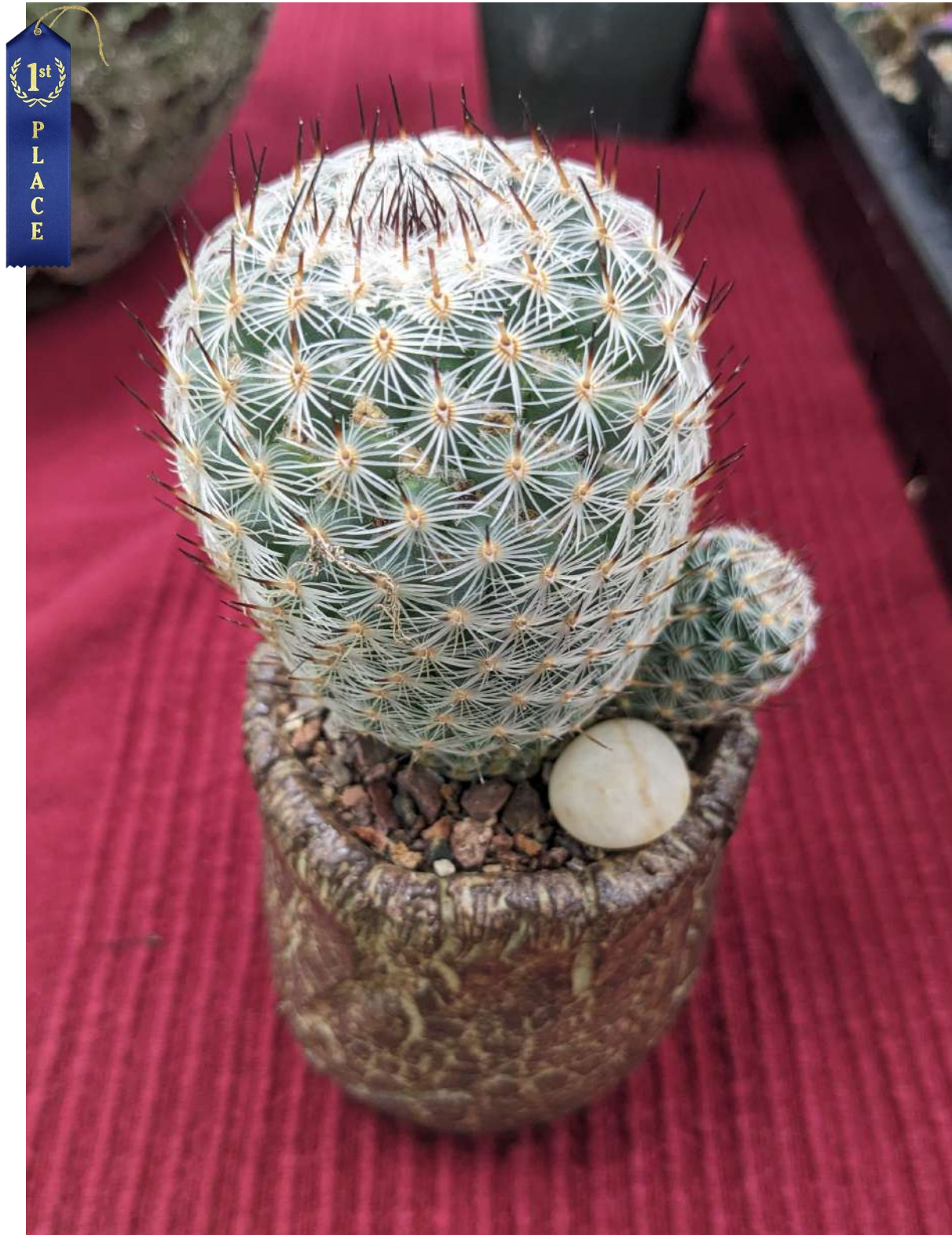
Candy Garner



Echeveria sp.

Unkown

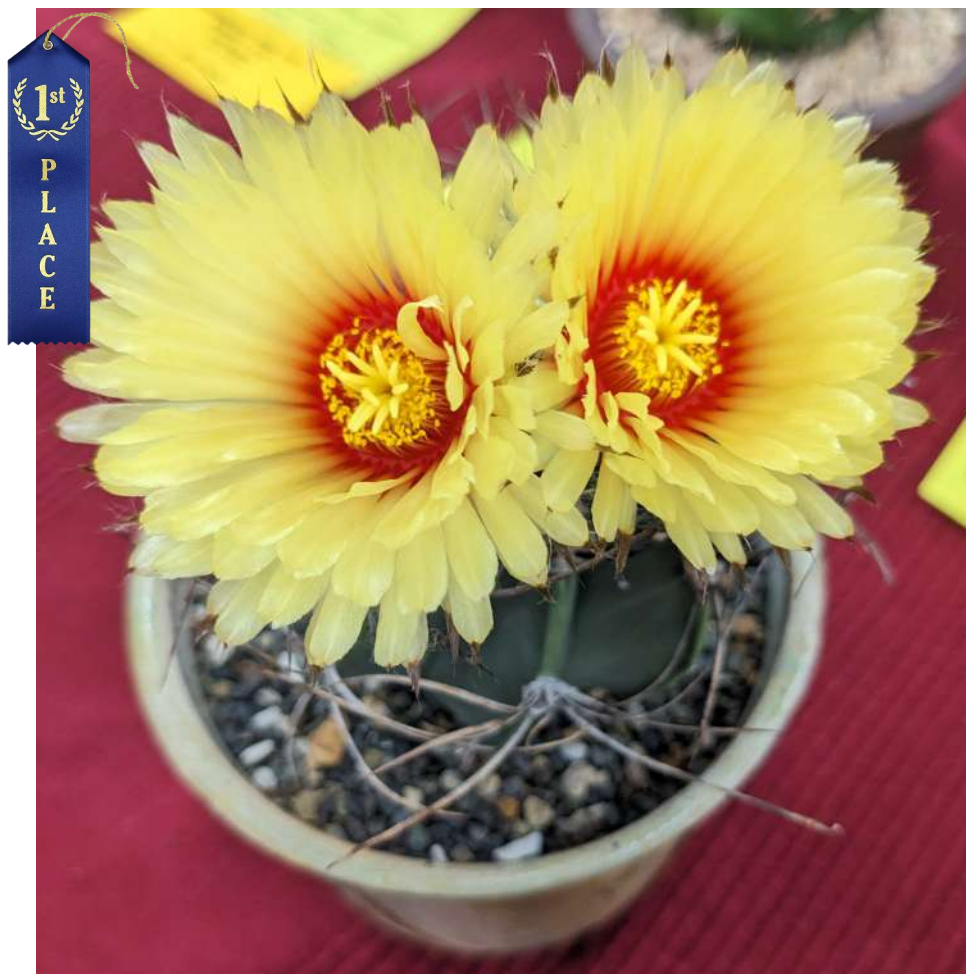
BRAG TABLE: NOVICE CACTUS



1st: *Mammillaria elegans*

Sergio Lopez

BRAG TABLE: INTERMEDIATE CACTUS



1st: *Astrophytum capricone*

Peter Hagopian



2nd: *Mammillaria hahniana*

Miriam Parent



3rd: *Mammillaria plumosa*

Miriam Parent

BRAG TABLE: INTERMEDIATE CACTUS



Gymnocalycium pflanzii marquezii

Norb Roden



Ferocactus echidne

Peter Hagopian



Gymnocalycium carminanthu

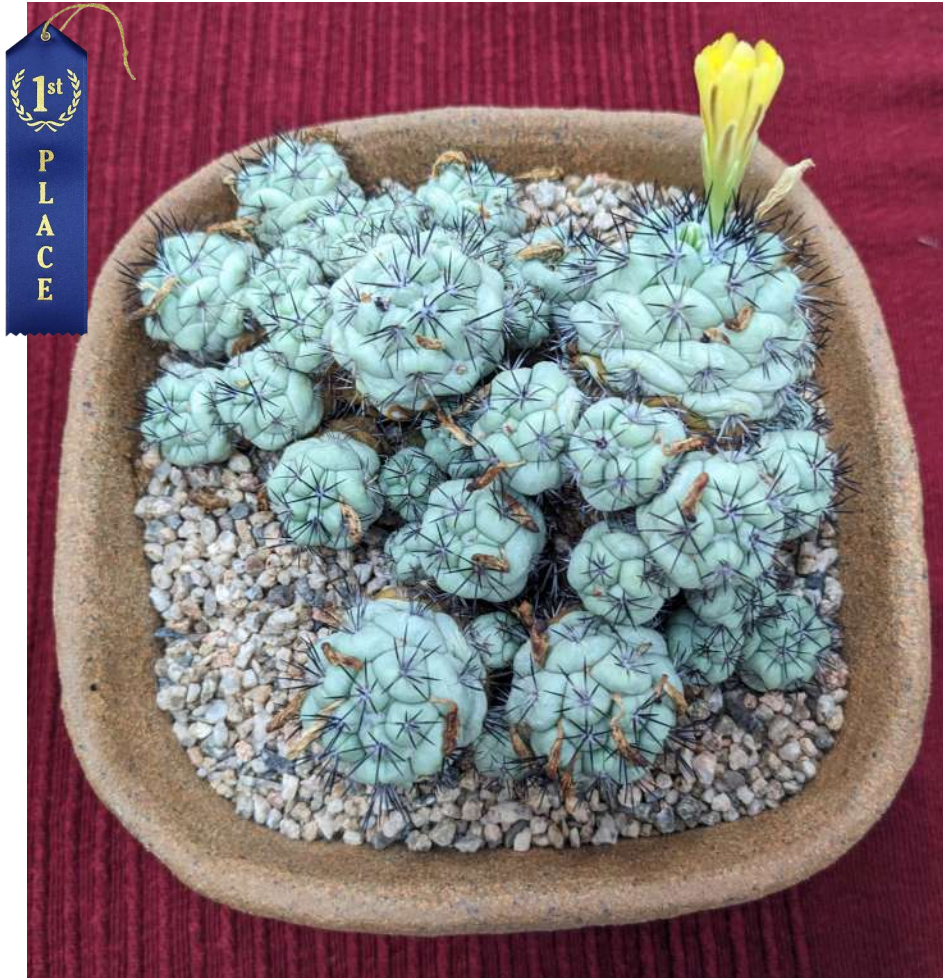
No Name Provided



Ariocarpus trigonus

Suzy Foran

BRAG TABLE: ADVANCED CACTUS



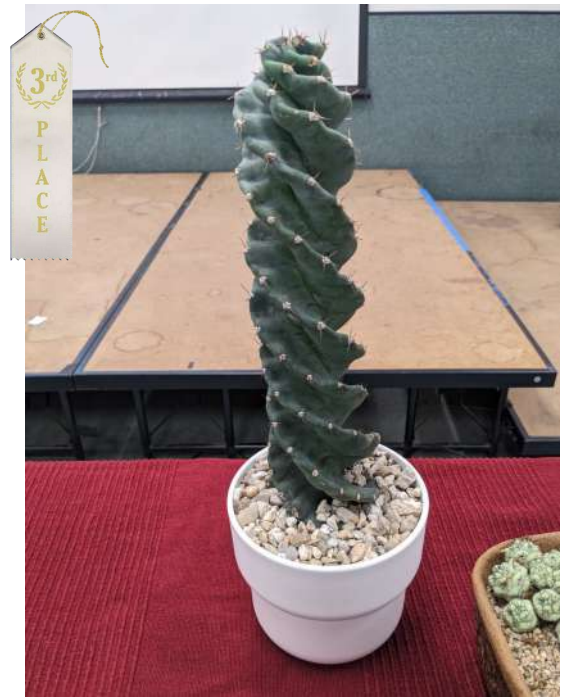
1st: *Ortegocactus macdougallii*

Brian Shepherd



2nd: *Melocactus curvispinus*

Grow Margo



3rd: *Cereus forbesii* cv. 'Spiralis'

Grow Margo