

# CACTUS CORNER NEWS

## *Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society*

<http://www.fresnocss.com>

*Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America*

Vol. 37 No. 11

November 2019

**Next meeting: Wednesday, November 6th, 2019; 7:00 p.m. (Doors open 6:30 p.m.) Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1084 West Bullard, Fresno. Because of an issue with the church calendar, the November FC&SS meeting will be held the first WEDNESDAY, November 6th, not the first Thursday. Time and place are the same.**

### **Journey to Europe's Hawaiian Islands: Volcanos, Aeoniums, and Super-Sized Daisies off the Coast of Northern Africa**

**By Peter Beiersdorfer**



This talk will focus on the flora of the Spanish Island of Lanzarote, which is one of the driest of the Canary Islands. The island of Lanzarote lies roughly 80 miles off the coast of Western Sahara and Morocco. With its 327 square miles, it is slightly bigger than the Hawaiian Island of Moloka'i, and it has a population density one third that of O'ahu. Much of the island is covered with vast lava fields, cinder cones, and calderas from the most recent eruption. Nevertheless, this charming island has a full assortment of succulent plants emblematic of the Canary Island. The endemic plants on Lanzarote include a rugged species of Aeonium and its own species of sedum as well as rosette-forming Aichrysons and dainty Monanthes. Its hillsides are covered with various species of Euphorbias and Echiums, plus it is the home of *Caralluma burchardii*, which is a rare succulent Asclepiad. It is also home of numerous daisy species that color much of the island after a winter rain. To top it off, Lanzarote and the neighboring Spanish Island of Fuerteventura have their own species of "dandelion" that reaches up to six feet in height! This talk will present the wonderful sights of the island's villages, volcanos, and landscape together with highlights of Lanzarote's superb flora. The talk will also compare Lanzarote's unique plant species to related species endemic to the wetter Canary Islands 200 miles further to the west.



Peter has been traveling extensively around the world to explore and photograph succulent flora in habitat including Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Namibia, South Africa, various Caribbean Islands, and the Mediterranean Coast. In fact, Peter has returned just a few days ago from a trip to the Atacama desert in Chile, and will leave next week to visit the Canary Islands again. Peter has an extensive collection of succulent plants at his home in Livermore. He propagates plants from seeds and cuttings, including many mesembs and bulbs from the winter rainfall areas of South Africa.

*Let's give Peter a warm welcome back!*

~~ DINNER ~~

High Sierra Bar & Grill  
2003 W. Bullard Avenue  
Fresno, (559) 570-1900

[Menu](#)

Begins promptly at 5:00 p.m.  
Reservations under Fresno  
Cactus Club. Members are  
invited to attend.

Contact Rosanna by  
Tuesday, November 5th  
to make reservations:  
Phone: (559) 999-0017

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#### FROM THE PREZ ...

Hi, All,

November, already. We know that winter is in the offing – somewhere. If you have tender succulents outside, it's time to plan for their transport to a protected location. If you have a lot of plants, don't wait until the last minute.

We've had to adjust our meeting schedule a few times in recent months, and for that we beg your forbearance. This is our first year at Redeemer Lutheran and we and the church will eventually get our respective meeting calendars straightened out. Thanks to Rosanna for keeping alert to any issues.

While the year is nearly over, we do still have a few events ahead of us. The election of 2020 officers will take place at this meeting. You will find the slate of candidates in this issue.

Then, in December, we have our potluck Christmas party. We always have a lot of fun at this event, with great food, a silent auction and installation of new officers. Make plans now to be there (Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>).

We should have a very interesting program this month. Hope to see you all there, **Sue**

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#### ELECTION OF 2020 OFFICERS

**Robert Scott, President**

**Rosanna Rojas, Vice President**

**Michele Roberts, Treasurer**

**Karen Willoughby, Secretary**

**Sue Haffner, Affiliate Representative**

**Christeen Abbott, Board member**

**Dominic Ortiz, Board member**

**Sue Haffner, Board member**

**(continuing Board Members: Cindy Duwe,  
Bill Gale Craig Roberts)**

**Nominations may be made from the floor at this meeting for any of the above offices. The person nominated must be present, and each nomination needs to be seconded.**



Under their big hats it's Marilyn Carter and Michele Roberts at our club's information table. Clovis Botanical Garden, October 19<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks, Ladies!

## FRESNO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY BOARD MEETING OCTOBER 7, 2019

Called to order at 6:05 p.m. by President Sue Haffner. In attendance were the following; Cindy Duwe, Bill Gale, Michele & Craig Roberts, Jim Brummel, Fred Gaumer, Mary Drumheller, Rob Scott and myself, Karen Willoughby. Absent were Rosanna Rojas and Marilyn Carter.

### OFFICER REPORTS:

**President:** No report.

**Vice-President:** Rosanna was absent. Peter Biersdorfer is the scheduled speaker for November.

**Treasurer:** Bank balance as reported by Michelle.

**Affiliate Rep:** Fred reported that he wanted to step down as CSSA Rep. Sue will step into his place.

### OLD BUSINESS:

**Clovis Botanical Garden:** The fall event is October 18th and Michele will man our booth with help from Marilyn Carter.

**Nominating committee:** Presented slate at the October meeting. Voting will take place in November and forms will be needed in case there are nominations from the floor. Karen will print these up for the meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS:

**2020 Show and Sale:** Our date had to be moved back a week to the last weekend in May because of a conflict with the San Francisco Club. Our space at the Fairgrounds has been reserved and Rob will confirm the change with Fair personnel.

**Updated membership folders:** Craig is working on these.

**Rides to meetings:** One of our members is requesting rides to the meetings and this request will be in the newsletter next month.

**990 IRS form:** Michele reported she already does the 990 form discussed in the last board meeting.

**2020 Budget:** This was discussed with revisions made from the 2019 budget.

**Gifts for officers, board and others:** The possibility of giving nice plants was proposed and will be investigated. Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m. Next board meeting is scheduled for November 18th as the 11th is a holiday.

Members who would like more detailed information on these topics can speak to any board member.

**Respectfully submitted, Karen Willoughby, Secretary.**



### BOARD MEETING

**Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m. at  
The Discovery Center  
1937 North Winery  
Gates open at 5:30 p.m.**

**Nature Kids is the building on the  
west side of the Fresno Discovery Center**

**Any member is welcome to attend.**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** *Karen Willoughby, Merri Larson (7<sup>th</sup>); Carrie Wise (19<sup>th</sup>); Nancy Jobin (11<sup>th</sup>); Sue Haffner (14<sup>th</sup>); Dan Gale (17<sup>th</sup>); Cindy Duwe (20<sup>th</sup>); Joe Nishimoto (24<sup>th</sup>).*



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**Visitors last month:** Lucy Lopez, Susan Brunkhorst, Sandy Yates, Jed Noonkester and Inga Goolkasian.



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**A get well card was sent to Bruce Hargreaves** who is recovering from surgery.

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**2020 BUDGET (as approved by the board)**

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Annual donations                  | 400.00           |
| Bank charges                      | 100.00           |
| Bus trip                          | 1300.00          |
| CGCA membership @ 2.75 per member | 412.00           |
| CGCA liability insurance          | 150.00           |
| CSSA affiliate fee                | 100.00           |
| CSSA journal                      | 55.00            |
| Hospitality supplies              | 400.00           |
| Library books/supplies            | 200.00           |
| Miscellaneous expenses            | 400.00           |
| Newsletter and postage            | 350.00           |
| Office supplies and expenses      | 299.00           |
| Officer gifts                     | 475.00           |
| Potluck, Christmas                | 400.00           |
| Potluck, Picnic                   | 300.00           |
| Printing – flyers, handouts, etc  | 500.00           |
| Raffle plants                     | 765.00           |
| Room rent                         | 1200.00          |
| Show and sale expenses            | 10,000.00        |
| Speakers (fee, hotel, dinner)     | 3000.00          |
| Storage unit rent                 | 600.00           |
| Web hosting                       | 55.00            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>21,362.00</b> |

Some of these amounts are approximations; in several cases we don't spend the amount budgeted. Only a few, such as rent and memberships are stipulated

**CACTUS SPINES ARE DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE PLANT**

In Texas, a cactus has earned the common name of "Horse Crippler" or "Mule Crippler" and for good reason! It is true that the spines protect some plants from animals and humans, but they have other important purposes, as well.

- Some cacti spines are designed to help camouflage the plants, giving them additional protection.
- Spines reflect light, shading the stem and reducing water loss by evaporation.
- Spines form a boundary layer around the stem, reducing air movement and further reducing evaporation.
- Cacti in foggy areas use spines to condense the fog into liquid that drops to the ground around the base of the plant.
- Some cacti. Such as chollas, are dispersed by spines sticking to the skin or fur of animals.

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**Cactus spines are not poisonous.** They just feel that way if they get into your fingers. All the same, it's best not to ignore a wound from cactus spines. The plant may not have meant it personally but a puncture can get infected.

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**Touching soil** may improve mood and immunity. A 2007 study in *Neuroscience* found that contact with a particular bacteria found in soil increased serotonin levels in mice. Other research has found the same bacteria boosts immune responses in human. So... don't be afraid to get dirty, it's good for you!

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**"Gardening is medicine** that does not need a prescription ... and has no limit on dosage."

Anonymous

**OCTOBER BRAG TABLE:** Jack Fleming brought several beautiful plants of *Euphorbia francoisii*, one of them a Thai hybrid; Brian Nagles showed a nice *Mammillaria plumosa* in a decorative container; Howard McLachlin exhibited *Adromischus cristatus*; Marilyn Carter showed *Haworthia truncata*; Bill Gale brought in a hybrid euphorbia. Thanks to all of them. Thanks, also, to Mark Muradian who filled in for Fred Gaumer, whose attendance was required at birthday festivities that evening.



Photos by  
Cindy Duwe



**WORKSHOP REPORT:** The workshopers met at the Betty Rodriguez Library on Thursday, October 24th. We looked at plants in the following genera: Sempervivum, Sarcocaulon, Sinningia, Sulcorebutia, Sansevieria, Raphionacme and Rebutia. We also looked at other plants members were thought were interesting. Bringing plants were: Jack Fleming, Bill Gale, Sue Haffner, Mary Drumheller, Val McCullough, Dan Gale, Dennis Anderson and Karl Church. Discussion topics were winter growers and what people are doing to get ready for winter. The November workshop will be held at the library on Thursday, November 14th, 6 p.m. Genera studied will be those starting with T and U.



Photos by  
Karen Willoughby



**Karen Willoughby's Haemanthus albiflos plants are popping** out their white "shaving brush" type flowers. As with other southern African bulbs this is their season to shine. Unlike other bulbs, though, this haemanthus does not go dormant, but stays green all year around. It's an excellent plant for a shady or semi-shady area



**Fleming's Larryleachia cactiforme.** It's 21 years old and has 19 arms. He bought it as a little plant from Kactus King in Vista, CA.



## Post 2019 Fresno Fair

I wish to thank several club members, who volunteered for plant monitor during the 2019 Big Fresno Fair. The volunteers were: Nicki Bradford, Susan Cook, Bill Gale, Dan Gale, Dwight Horiuchi, Nancy Jobin, Val McCullough, Joe Nishimoto, Linda Olivas, Domenic Ortiz, James Rojas, Rosanna Rojas, Tony Sharp, Charlene Stebles, and Roz Tampone. They provided information on cacti and succulents, their experiences in caring, cultivating and maintaining their plants, FCSS club activities and events to the public.

Club members who exhibited plants in the cactus and succulent display included Bill Gale, Rudy Rulloda, Dwight Horiuchi, Sue Haffner, Roz Tampone, Val McCullough and Josie DeHart. They all won at least one blue ribbon. Judged Best Cactus was Dwight's multi-headed *Echinofossulocactus crispatus*; Best Succulent was Bill's *Operculicarya decaryi*. We thank them all for their participation. ***Rudy Rulloda, Fresno Fair Coordinator***



## 10 YEARS AGO, IN THE CLUB ...

Ten years ago, the club was just beginning to meet at the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center. The officers were Sue Haffner, President; Pam Margosan, Vice President; Polly Dunklin, Treasurer; Mary Ann Diaz-Villegas, Secretary; Fred Gaumer, Affiliate Representative. Serving on the Board of Directors were Dwight Horiuchi, Ouita Windmueller, Rudy Rapisura, Jack Fleming and Tom Meyer. Larry Homan was Webmaster and Madeleine Mitchell was Librarian.

Among the speakers in 2009 were Ernesto Sandoval, Naomi and Frank Bloss, Joyce Quinn, Nick Wilkinson, Rudy Lime and Nels Christianson. The Annual Show and Sale was held May 9-10 at Sierra Vista Mall.

We had an ambitious April Home Tour that year. We started in east Fresno at the garden of Wayne and Laurie Ceronsky, then went to the light industrial area of south Van Ness to visit the glass studios of Bob and Laurie Kliss. From there it was off to Hanford to see Anthony Thomas' greenhouse, then doubled back to rural Kings County to Mark Muradian's cactus ranch. Whew! It was a long day.

The July Potluck Picnic was held in Doris Hooton's backyard.

Current members who joined that year included Dan Gale, Carole Grosch, Dan and Frances Cardenas and Viv Shinkawa.

Two members passed away in 2009: George Taylor and Roger Vincon. ***Sue***

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## ESCOBARIA MINIMA

By Elton Roberts

*Escobaria minima* are the diamonds among the small growing cacti. I have never, that I can remember, heard anyone put the plant down: like saying, 'the plant is so hard to grow I do not want to bother'; or, 'every time I get one of them it refuses to grow for me'; or 'I have lost every one I ever tried to grow'; or 'the plant rots at the drop of a hat.'

The first time I saw one of the plants it was in someone's collection. He had a small cluster of the plant and I asked if he propagated it I would sure like to get one. On the spot he got a knife and cut the top of one head off and handed it to me. That piece was only about the diameter of the little finger and only about a half inch long. I thought it would not grow, but it fooled me and I still have it almost 30 years later; see photo one. The plant is 28 cm in diameter and is 13 cm tall. The official description says the plants are solitary, or occasionally branching. The stems are ovoid and 1.2 to 2.5 cm tall and to 2 cm in diameter. That is not very large, only to an inch tall and about ¾ inch in diameter. In cultivation the plants grow a lot different: larger in diameter, taller and make beautiful clumps.

Another photo shows the spines in good detail. As can be seen they are not really a long tapering needle like so many cactus spines. They are mostly the same diameter till right close to the tip then they taper to a point. I have never been stuck by one of the spines as they are too dull. And add to that they mostly lay flat to the plant. The spines are considered to be all radials. They have a larger base and grow from a felt covered areole, straight or curving, up to about 8 mm long, almost white to orange-pink.

The flowers form at the tip of the stem, first appearing as pinkish buds under the spine clusters. One day later they are pushing through and above the spine clusters. In habitat the plants are only to an inch tall and according to Backeberg the flowers are 1.5 cm in diameter. Anderson and the NCL list the flowers as 2 cm in diameter and I think this is more realistic. The plants bloom quite often during the summer, up until the end of October or the first week of November.

*Escobaria minima* was first named in 1931 as *Coryphantha minima* by Baird; then Croizat called it *Coryphantha nelliae* in 1934. It remained either one of these names till Backeberg changed it to *Escobaria nelliae* in 1961. People kept both names after that for quite a number of years. When I first saw the plant I was told that no one can decide what the plant is and that both names are correct. So it was either *Coryphantha nelliae* or *Escobaria nelliae*; for a long time I saw the plants under either name but once in a while I would see it under *Coryphantha minima*. In 1976 Hunt renamed it for the original name of *minima* and put it under *Escobaria*. It has remained under that name ever since.

I have had no problems growing the plants. Even from seed they seem to be easy. I give them an open, fast draining soil. They come from around Marathon, Brewster Co., Texas at 4,000 to 4,500 feet elevation, receiving some winter rain, also can get some snow. If kept dry over the winter the plants can take temperatures to 15F. I have lost plants to alkaline water or soil—they hate alkaline water and soil; they do best in acidic soil with a pH of about 5 to 5.5. The plants in habitat grow in desert grasslands where Mother Nature takes good care of them. I have seen plants grown in lots of shade and the plants are skinny and elongated. To keep compact and shaped right they need good light. Some people say to add limestone to the soil so it will make good spines. This is not the thing to do and it will make the plant so it does not grow very well, if at all.



(From an email post of March 23, 2012)