

# CACTUS CORNER NEWS

*Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society*

*fresnocss.com*

*Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America*

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**NEXT ZOOM MEETING: THURSDAY, MAY 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.**

**Meeting ID: 868 9812 3285      Passcode: 990099**

## **Exploring Euphorbias**

**By Tom Glavich**

There are Euphorbias native to almost every continent. This talk will look at Euphorbias from a few selected regions, famous for the collectable Euphorbias. We will visit South Africa, Madagascar, Northern Africa and Mexico, looking at similarities and differences with geographic environment. The talk will also include sections on propagation and cultivation.



Tom Glavich is a long-time grower of succulent plants. He is one of the co-chairs of the Inter-City Cactus and Succulent Show held every August (including the upcoming one) at the Los Angeles County Arboretum. He is a frequent contributor to CSSA publications, and have given talks on succulent plants to most of the California clubs. He is an active participant in the CSSA annual how and sale.





## From the Prez...

### *Hello Members,*

I don't know about you, but I am not ready for all this warm weather we're having! Looks like we have another really hot summer ahead of us. Luckily, we still have a few more cool nights to enjoy first. This warm weather also means it's time to start putting our Spring to-do lists together. I don't know about you, but repotting is definitely on my list this go around! With plants starting to wake up it's a great time to repot and get them into larger pots with fresh soil. Having your plants wake up to fresh soil does wonders for new growth. It can be a lot of work to repot your plants but it's good to do every few years. Soil in pots starts to break down over the years, causing the spaces between soil particles to become smaller. This breakdown results in less oxygen getting to your plants' roots and reduces drainage. This is especially the case with soil mixes that use more organic materials, like bark and potting soil. With new soil your plants will perk up and put on some nice growth. So, take the time to give new soil to your plants!

On to official club business. Let's start with the news about the club and the Fresno Home & Garden Show this year. Earlier this year we had decided not to participate in this event. We didn't have the number of workers needed to man the sale. Now that local COVID-19 infection rates are on the decline, we have enough people who feel safe after having been vaccinated that we can support having the event. As a side note, this really shows how everything the club does depends on our members and their hard work. The club depends on our members in order for things to run and we can't thank those who help enough. The Fresno Home & Garden Show will be May 21<sup>st</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup> this year. Our group of local vendors will be there selling, and we expect the public to be hungry for plants. The Home Show will look different this year. Everyone is required to wear a mask, new vendor layouts to accommodate social distancing, and smaller, more controlled crowds. Nonetheless, we will make it work. We are still looking for a few more people to help us with registers and packing plants. If you're interested, please contact me for more information.

This is going to be a busy Spring for us. After the Home Show we'll be having our Spring Silent Auction. The auction will start June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm and run until June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Item pickup will be on June 11<sup>th</sup> at the Fresno Lowes. We need donated items from you to make this auction work. If you have plants, cuttings, pots, books, garden items or anything you would like to donate, please contact me. You can send me photos of the items and bring them to the pickup on June 11<sup>th</sup>, or we can meet beforehand to deliver items to me personally. All items and photos need to be submitted to me by May 28<sup>th</sup>. The auction is a great way to get rid of extra stuff, but also a great way to find new items you don't have yet. Let's be honest, I know we've all been plant starved this year, so please donate, and help make this an amazing event for the club.

Stay safe,

**Robert**

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**MAY BIRTHDAYS**

*Fred Gaumer, Bill Gale (2<sup>nd</sup>);  
Vickie Veen (5<sup>th</sup>); Valerie Kissler 7<sup>th</sup>;  
Mary Arellanez (10<sup>th</sup>); Susan Nagles (13<sup>th</sup>)  
Kathleen Sebetka (15<sup>th</sup>); Charlie Nelson (23<sup>rd</sup>);  
Brian Nagles (24<sup>th</sup>); Lynne Rayner (27<sup>th</sup>);  
Madeleine Mitchell (28<sup>th</sup>)*

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*Welcome*

**New member:** Gabriel and Alisha Pena, Fresno

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**PLANT SALE THIS MONTH**

**Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society**  
Plant Sale

Friday, April 30th-Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Shepard Garden & Art Center  
3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento

They are not having a show this year, just a sale.  
The vendors will be both in the building and outside  
in the patio where they normally hold the sale.

Hours: Friday, 1 p.m.-6 p.m.;

Saturday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Covid-19 protocols will be in place.

[www.sacramentocss.com](http://www.sacramentocss.com)

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Looking ahead ...

**Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society**

Show and Sale

September 25-26

Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa St, San Luis Obispo

Hours: Saturday, 10-6; Sunday, 10-4

[www.centralcoastcactus.org](http://www.centralcoastcactus.org)

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**ERNESTO'S WEBSITE**

There is a lot of information at Ernesto Sandoval's  
UC Davis website, notably their famous soil mix.  
There also is a list of Ernesto's lectures, available for  
reading or download:

<https://greenhouse.ucdavis.edu/conservatory/resources.html>

**Newsletter articles submissions are  
due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.**

**ZOOM CLASSES OF INTEREST**

The local Master Gardeners are presenting  
upcoming Zoom classes on Saturday mornings,  
10:00 a.m.:

May 15<sup>th</sup>: Succulents I, plant ID and care

May 22<sup>nd</sup>: Succulents II, containers and crafts

June 19<sup>th</sup>: Succulents III, what's eating my plants?

Register online: [www.fresnolibrary.libcal.com](http://www.fresnolibrary.libcal.com)

For more information: [mgfresno@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgfresno@ucdavis.edu)

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**Film about *Dudleya* poaching:** a young brother  
and sister team has produced a short  
documentary film about the recent theft of  
these succulents from the California coast:

[www.plantheistfilm.com](http://www.plantheistfilm.com)

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**Gary Duke, our speaker last month**, mentioned  
Cactus Quest, as a source of plant information.  
Check it out, if you haven't already done so. I  
clicked on it and watched a short video of  
Woody Minnich explaining Crassulacean Acid  
metabolism (CAM). You can also tour Woody's  
greenhouse.

[www.facebook.com/cactusquest/](http://www.facebook.com/cactusquest/)

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**CSSA webinars ...**

**May 1, 10:00 a.m.:** **Matt Opel** will present "Cape  
Geophytes: remarkable bulbs, tubers and corms  
from southern Africa." To register go to the  
CSSA website:

[www.cactusandsucculentsociety.org](http://www.cactusandsucculentsociety.org)

**The April 3<sup>rd</sup> webinar by Steven Brack**, "Out of  
the Fire and into the Pan", was a fascinating  
exploration of the tiny plant communities found  
in depressions in rocky outcrops of the South  
African desert

## ***Getting to Know You***

### ***Norma Forbes***

If there is one thing Norma Forbes has experienced, it's living in different growing zones. Born in Noel, Missouri, Norma grew up in Lebanon, Oregon, and attended Oregon State University in Corvallis, followed by the University of Washington in Seattle. In the Emerald City, she met her husband, then moved to Ypsilanti, Michigan, and obtained a BA in Public Administration and Human Resources.



"While traveling with my military husband, I took college classes wherever we lived," said Norma. "Eventually, I graduated with an MBA in Business Administration from Golden Gate University in San Francisco.

"I worked for 14 years in Fresno as the Executive Director of a wonderful nonprofit organization where I heard from a colleague about FCSS. She was very much into succulents and tweaked my interest in them by sharing cuttings with me.

"My family were natural gardeners, but I had strayed away from growing plants during my moving and job traveling years. FCSS meetings were very informative, educational, and fun! It was easy for me to go to their meetings after work and learn from them."

Norma said it is also great fun to meet fellow gardeners through FCSS". "People who like cactus and succulents are great people with great plants!" she says.

After being exposed to a wide variety of succulents, Norma can't really name a favorite; she says she enjoys growing them all.

"It has amazed me the resiliency of cactus and succulents. I think their strong nature to grow, their wonderful diversity, and their astoundingly beautiful blooms make them the perfect plants for new gardeners. My tip is, just stick with them!"

Orchids are another favorite group of plants Norma enjoys growing. She's working on perfecting them to rebloom.

Norma relates that her best traveling car partner was a big orange cat named Tiger.

"He was so good at traveling in the car," she remembers. "When I arrived at my gated temporary housing, the security guard always said hello and asked if I had my big cat with me. I never had to say yes; Tiger mewed his reply! Quiet during the entire trip but said his own version of hello to the guard."

Tiger always made Norma and the security guard smile.

***Carole Grosch***

## SENECIO HAWORTHII

This distinctive little plant with its snow-white leaves is occasionally found in garden shops. Native to rocky, hot, dry areas of the Little Karoo region of South Africa, *Senecio haworthii* caught the attention of plant collectors long ago.

In 1812, A.H. Haworth wrote: "This extraordinary plant ... is completely enveloped in a short, dense skin-like cover of cottony wool, which is even capable of being stripped off the leaves like a skin, leaving the leaves themselves green after being divested of it. This cotton, if lighted in the flame of a candle, slowly consumes in the manner of touch paper\*, owing to the resinous quality of the genus."



It is described as an evergreen shrublet, branching from the base, branches one to one and a half feet tall. The yellow flowers are rarely produced.

*Senecio haworthii* is best grown in a pot, as watering needs to be controlled (overwatering can be a problem.) The plants tend to become leggy as lower leaves die off, but can be easily propagated from cuttings.

This plant suffered from various name changes early in its history, a process that has not ceased. A 2012 paper proposed an entirely new genus for the woolly senecios: *Caputia* (in honor of the Cape Province). This rearrangement has been accepted; *Senecio haworthii* is now *Caputia tomentosa*. The commonly-grown *Senecio scaposus* is now *Caputia scaposa*. As always, nurseries and growers will take years to accept the new names.

(Reference: Rowley, G.D. (1994) "Succulent Compositae")

\*Touch paper: A strip of paper impregnated with niter, for lighting fireworks or explosive substances.

*Sue*



Photo From Wikipedia

**Question:** We have a large beaked yucca (*Yucca rostrata*) in our garden that bloomed this past spring. Can we cut off the bloom stalk? If so, when?

**Answer:** Peter Gerlach, horticulturist and yucca grower at Mountain States Wholesale Nursery (Glendale, AZ) says that for the health of the plant, there is no reason to remove the yucca stalk, which may in fact serve as a bird habitat. It is okay, however, to remove it for cosmetic reasons. If you choose to cut off the stalk, Gerlach suggests waiting to do so until the stalk is dry. "I do not cut flush with the crown, but leave a small nub," he notes. If cut too low, the old stalk area can hold water and rot.

(*Phoenix Home & Garden Magazine*, Oct. 2015)

## ECHINOCEREUS COCCINEUS

*Echinocereus coccineus* is a small cactus found widely across the Southwest (Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona and Utah). Specimens consist of a cluster of short, equal size stems tightly packed to form a dense, hemispherical cluster which can reach several feet in diameter. Each stem is from 2 to 6 inches high and up to 2 ½ inches wide. All spines are slender to medium in thickness, almost bristle-like, white, gray-white or straw colored. Due to the close areoles and the length of the spines, the general appearance is of a mass of whitish bristles, leading to the common name “Hedgehog Cactus”, “Texas Hedgehog,” etc. Plants of *coccineus* can exhibit considerable morphological variation, even in plants that occur within a few meters of each other. Rocky habitats can support large multistemmed plants, while plants with larger and fewer stems tend to grow in deeper soil.



Names: this plant has had way too many names. For many years it was lumped in with *Echinocereus triglochidiatus*, but recent DNA research has shown that *coccineus* populations are discrete genetically. The descriptive epithet *coccineus* means “scarlet” in Latin, in recognition of the bright red flowers.

Elton Roberts writes: “In the photos of the plant, it does not look like much but when it is in bloom it puts on a show. One thing about these plants is that they are either female or male. Not too many other cacti are that way. The plant in photo 1 is female. You can try forever to cross female plants with each other and never get seed. Notice that the flowers in the first photo have no pollen. The male flowers are loaded with pollen. On a lot of male plants the anthers will not open for a day or two after the flower first opens. I do not know if this is to keep the plant getting its own pollen on the stigma, or just why.

“I have 3 of the plants, each with a different flower color. The female flowers have more white in the center, where the male flowers are greenish-cream colored in the center. The female flower is more red, the male flowers are lighter red. The plant in the photo is 71 cm across, its size held in check by the container. I have the plants outside all year, in fast-draining soil. Mine have taken temperatures down to 9F dry, to 16F wet.”

**Sue**



Echinocereus coccineus flowers – Elton Roberts:

“Echinocereus coccineus of different colors. I have from white flowers to dark red. In southern New Mexico the plants are being crossed back and forth. If no one bothers them in several hundred years, they may settle down into a new species of Echinocereus. Who knows??”



Echinocereus coccineus –  
pink, 2-flower



Echinocereus coccineus -  
pink



Echinocereus coccineus -  
orangish – gold



Echinocereus coccineus –  
orange-gold, 4-flower



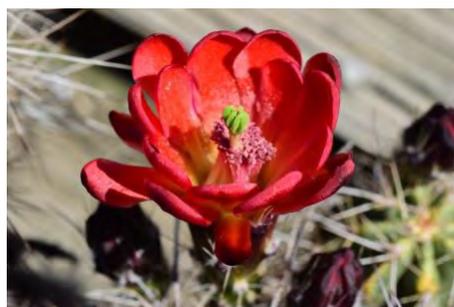
Echinocereus coccineus -  
reddish-orange



Echinocereus coccineus -  
reddish, lighter center,  
dark pollen



Echinocereus coccineus  
red, light center, dark pink pollen



Echinocereus coccineus -  
red



Echinocereus coccineus -  
orange-gold