

# CACTUS CORNER NEWS

*Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society*  
[fresnocss.com](http://fresnocss.com)

*Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America*

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**IN-PERSON MEETING:** THURSDAY, MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 7:00 P.M. (Doors open 6:30 P.M.)  
REDEEMER LUTHERN CHURCH  
1084 WEST BULLARD, FRESNO (NEAR NW CORNER OF PALM AND BULLARD)

## FROM THE PREZ . . .

Hi Members,



**Let get down to business!**

We are just about a month away from our Annual Show and Sale, June 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>. We haven't had this event for two years and we are ready to make it even better than it was before. We have vendors from around the State coming to sell their amazing plants and beautiful pottery. This is the must go to event for anyone who loves cactus and succulents. This year we are back at the Fairground in the Commerce Building to give us lots of room. We will need the room as we are also having a judged plant show.

This is where club members from all levels, novice to advanced can show off the plants they have worked so hard to grow. It's a really fun event to have your plants compete against others to win ribbons. If you haven't participated in a judged plant show before, I highly recommend starting. You won't be disappointed. Look for the article in this newsletter that Karen wrote on how to get your plants ready to show.

We also can't forget about the sale part of this event. The sale is what brings in funds to keep this club running throughout the year. It takes lots of people to make an event like this work and we are calling upon you to help us. We need volunteers to help with the sale by working in checkout. Either scanning barcodes and taking payments, to helping package plants for the customer. It's a simple and easy job, but we need the people to do it. On the show side, we need people to walk around watching the show plants. It's kind of like guard duty, we have members walk the show area making sure the show plants stay safe. We can use your help in a multitude of ways, and hope you sign up to help. We will have sign-up sheets at the next meeting and an online sign-up that will be emailed to you.

Oh, wait, how about a reward for helping us! Volunteers will be getting Show Bucks for helping this year. For 2-hours of working, you will receive a coupon worth \$5.00 off your

(Continued on next page.)

purchase. These coupons can be saved and used at any Annual Show & Sale or Home & Garden show. You can work up to 4-hours a day to receive \$10.00 in Show Bucks and use it towards any purchase you make. A great incentive to help us run this event!

This is also your chance to donate any extra plants, cuttings, pots, or books you might have to the club sales table. The club has its own sales table where it sells items that are donated to help raise money. One hundred percent of the funds made from these donations go right back to the club! If you do have items to donate, please bring them to the Fairgrounds on June 3<sup>rd</sup> during setup as we need time to price them before the sales starts on Saturday.

This event draws in a lot of people, and we can always use more boxes. If you would like to collect boxes that customers could use to hold their purchases, we would be extremely grateful! Boxes should be holding size and sturdy. Boxes can also be dropped off on Friday setup and you can drive right up to the building!

Other important news is we have changed the date for our June meeting. The first Thursday falls right before the June sale and it's too hard for the Board to work on the meeting when setup is the next day. We also want to give anyone attending the sale the chance to come to a meeting and not wait another month. **We have moved the June meeting to the second Thursday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.** This makes the next meeting the last meeting before our Annual Show & Sale. This is also your last chance to pick up event postcards and flyers to help us advertise. These are great to give out to friends and family and leave at appointments. Anywhere you go or anyone you talk to can get a postcard for the event. For anyone that can't make it to the meeting but would like some postcards to give out, we can send you a small amount through the mail. Just contact Karen or me and we will make sure you receive a few cards. That's a lot of information and more will be coming through email. For anyone who doesn't get email, if you have any questions, please contact a Board member for help.

I would also like to thank everyone who participated in purchasing plants at the last meeting from me. Everything sold at the last meeting went to Big Picture High School in Fresno to help send their Senior Class to Disneyland for Grad Night. With your help, we raised \$274 dollars to help the kids. I really appreciate your support and hope you enjoyed the plants.

This May meeting will be a little different from the regular meeting setup. We will be going over a lot of Annual Show & Sale information and how to get your plants ready to be shown. We won't be having a regular speaker this month but will have the plant raffle. We will be showing two videos, "Neoporteria, Ariocarpus, & Copiapoa with Gary Duke" and "How to Water Cacti & Succulents + Care Tips with Peter W." These two great videos have a lot of neat information. We hope you can make it to the meeting!

**Thank You,**

**Robert**





**Fred Gaumer, Bill Gale (2<sup>nd</sup>), Vickie Veen (5<sup>th</sup>), Valerie Kissler (7<sup>th</sup>), Mary C. Arellanez (10<sup>th</sup>), Patty Miller (12<sup>th</sup>), Susan Nagles (13<sup>th</sup>), Guillermo Cardenas (17<sup>th</sup>), Charlie Nelson (23<sup>rd</sup>), Brian Nagles (24<sup>th</sup>), Lynne Rayner (28<sup>th</sup>).**

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**A get-well card** was sent to Nancy Jobin. We hope she's back on her feet after surgery.

**Our sympathies** go out to Carole Grosch and family on the passing of her mother.

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**New Members:** Nancy Godwin, Jess Hull, Melinda Dresser-Oakes, all of Fresno.

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### COMING EVENTS

#### May 6-8, Sacramento Cactus & Succulent Society

Sale & Exhibition

Shepard Garden & Art Center

3330 McKinley Blvd, Sacramento

Hours: Friday, 1-6, Saturday, 9-6, Sunday, 9-4.

#### May 21-22, Carmichael Cactus & Succulent Society

Show & Sale

Carmichael Park Clubhouse

5750 Grant Ave, Carmichael

Hours: Saturday, 9-4; Sunday, 9-2:30.

#### May 28-29, Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society, Show & Sale (See flyer, last page).

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**After being Covid pause** for two years, the big Cactus & Succulent Society of America show & sale is back, July 1-3, at the Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino. More information will be forthcoming.

**A NON-EVENT: The Water-Wise Plant Give and Take**, which had been held at the CSUF Ornamental Horticulture Unit on the first Saturday in May, is no more. That's a shame, as it had been a popular event since 2009.

The University greenhouses, which used to be open on Saturday mornings, are no longer open to the public except for several special plant sales throughout the year. However, they do supply sale plants to the Gibson Farm Market, 5368 N. Chestnut. The hours are 9-5, Monday-Friday; 10-5, Saturday.

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**The latest CSSA webinar** featured Karen Ostler, well-known SoCal succulent grower and exhibitor. Her talk featured mammillarias, but she did mention some of her cultural practices:

- She feeds her plants at every watering with Miracle Gro Azalea, Camellia, Rhododendron Soluble Plant Food. She feels it gives the plants that shot of acid that they need.
- She sprays all her plants every week with a solution of rubbing alcohol with a few drops of Dawn dishwashing soap. This keeps the plants clean and discourages pests.

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**Available for free download:** "Guia Practica de Propagacion y Cultivo de las Especies del Genero Echeveria." This is a 112-page guide to the propagation of echeverias. Even if you don't read Spanish the text features very clear photos showing pollination, seed gathering and planting, seedling transplantation, and vegetative techniques of propagation. Just Google the title.

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**The CSSA newsletter**, To the Point, has just been sent to society members. It contains a number of interesting articles.

You can find a link to it on the CSSA website:

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

## SHOW PLANTS

By Karen Willoughby

I would like to encourage everyone to consider entering a plant or two in our upcoming show. Showing your pride and joy shows others what to strive for and allows you to learn how to be a better grower too. It's easy!

Plants are entered into type and species of plants. Many classes have numerous species in them. If you have a plant, you are proud of, please bring it to show and share with others. Most people are likely still novice growers (see rules in schedule), so you are entering with others who have similar experiences.

It's been a couple of years since any of us have done this but don't be intimated at all. This is competitive but that really isn't the point of the show. It's to give each of us a learning experience and show the public examples of well-grown plants. We do not require that you show in fancy pots or containers. Just make sure to clean the pots and remove dirt and spider webs from plants. If you are not sure of the ID of plants, we will have experts available to help you when it comes to entering your plants in the correct class. For those artsy people, create a dish garden or enter some craft work too!

All members are welcome to enter so please do not be shy! You could win a blue ribbon or two!



### AGAVE NICKELIAE

Agave nickelsiae is a good choice if you are looking for an ornamental agave that will not grow into a huge, offsetting monster. Native to the state of Coahuila, Mexico, it is found on south-sloping limestone hills at altitudes of 4,600-4,900 feet. Other agaves that grow in the same vicinity include *A. asperrima* and *lechuguilla*. These have hybridized with *nickelsiae*, with *asperrima x nickelsiae* producing the well-known 'Sharkskin.'

*Agave nickelsiae* forms a rosette 2 feet tall by 2 ½ to 3 feet in diameter. The dark green leaves, 10 to 15 inches long by 2 to 3 inches wide, are marked with decorative white bud prints. The smooth leaf margins are capped by prominent black terminal spines. Its bloom stalk is among the tallest in the genus, compared to the size of the plant, reaching as high as 20 feet. It produces a spike of white flowers with purple anthers.

Discovered in 1895, the species was named in honor of Anna Nickels, a pioneer American cactus collector and dealer. A later author re-named it *A. ferdinandii-regis*; then Howard Scott Gentry, in his agave monograph, published it as a variant of *A. victoriae-reginae*, not even worthy of a subspecies rank. In 2011 a group of botanists in Mexico did a study of the plant and moved it back to a species, restoring its original name.

*Agave nickelsiae* is easy to grow, very hardy once established. It produces the occasional offset; otherwise, propagation is by seeds.

*Sue*

## SOME CACTUS CHEMISTRY

A number of cactus species produce psychoactive chemicals, the best-known of which is Peyote (*Lophophora williamsii*). It contains an alkaloid called mescaline, which serves as a defense for the plant if it is eaten in large amounts. When it is consumed in small quantities, however, it can be a stimulant. Native Americans have utilized it and various other cacti in traditional religious ceremonies for many years.



Another cactus that can pack a punch is the tiny button cactus, *Epithelantha micromeris*. It contains other alkaloids: methyltyramine hordenine, methylepithe-lanthate and dimethoxyphenethylamine. The first two can make one more active and awake with increased dopamine and racing heartbeat. The third one is responsible for hallucinations and is a Schedule I drug, according to the FDA.

This was brought to my attention by an article in the April issue of *CDRI Desert news flash*, the newsletter of the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute ([www.cdri.org](http://www.cdri.org)). It seems a hungry kangaroo rat stole into their cactus museum one night and nibbled on several epithelantha plants. The poor critter was found the next morning in a lethargic state ("high as a kite," they thought) and was easily picked up and taken outside.

*Epithelantha micromeris* is a Chihuahuan Desert native, found in areas of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and south into northern Mexico. It's often available from specialty cactus dealers. It's a beautiful little white cactus, self-pollinating to produce the crown of scarlet fruits (photo by Elton Roberts). Each fruit contains a few seeds; it's easy to grow from seeds.

We hardly need to be reminded that possession of *Lophophora* is illegal (see California Health and Safety Code section 11363). How it came about that this modest little plant became illegal is recounted in Edward Anderson's book, "Peyote, the divine cactus." It's a head-shaking story.

**Sue**



**KALANCHOE ORGYALIS:** This is an interesting Madagascan species that can be frequently found in the garden shops. Its new foliage is especially attractive for the bronze color provided by the dense covering of 3-angled hairs. As the leaves age, the color fades.

*Kalanchoe orgyalis* is a perennial shrub which can reach 6 feet tall. Plants in cultivation do not usually get that large, however, as it is slower growing than most other kalanchoes. Cultivation is not difficult: good light, average watering, cut back when leggy. Propagation is by leaves, cuttings, or seeds. The flowers are lemon yellow. **Sue**

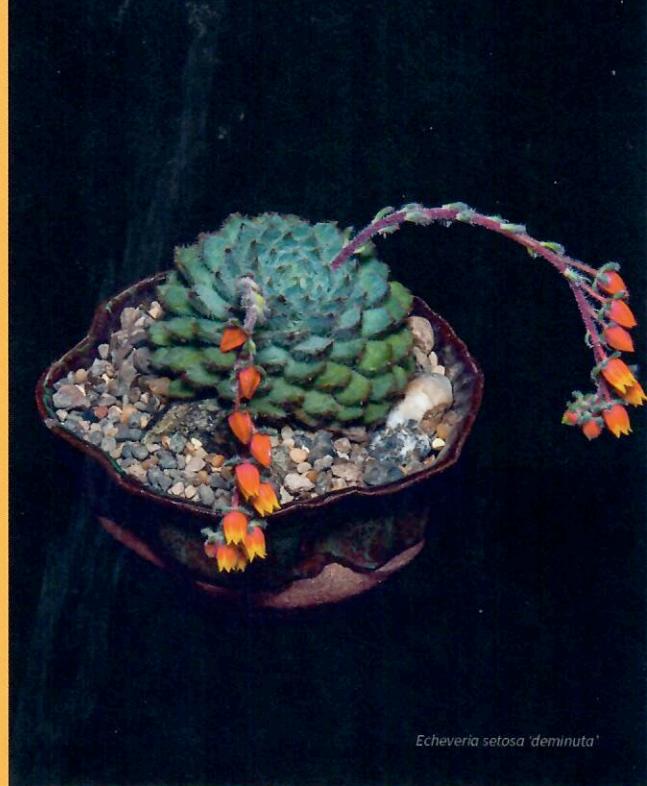
(Illus.: "Succulent and xerophytic plants of Madagascar", v.2)

CENTRAL COAST CACTUS  
& SUCCULENT SOCIETY

# 2022 SHOW & SALE

NEW LOCATION

# MAY 28&29



*Echeveria setosa 'deminuta'*

## 14TH ANNUAL SHOW & SALE

NEW  
LOCATION

Nipomo High School  
525 N Thompson Ave

Saturday, May 28 — 10 am to 5 pm  
Sunday, May 29 — 10 am to 4 pm

Free admission & parking on-site  
Experts available for questions  
Rare plants & handmade pottery sale  
Cash/check/credit cards accepted

For more details visit:  
[www.CentralCoastCactus.org](http://www.CentralCoastCactus.org)  
Central Coast Cactus  
& Succulent Society

STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH GUIDELINES WILL BE OBSERVED OR EXCEEDED