

CACTUS CORNER NEWS

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

<http://www.fresnocss.com>

Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

Vol. 43 No. 1

January 2024

IN-PERSON MEETING: THURSDAY, JANUARY 4, 7:00 P.M. (Doors open 6:30 p.m.)

REDEEMER LUTHERN CHURCH

1084 West Bullard, Fresno (Near NW Corner of Palm and Bullard)

ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION: Meeting ID: 861 8303 7241

Passcode: 072064

"Chile: More Than Copiapoas"

By Gary Duke

Gary more than just describes the family of Copiapoas, including some seldom seen. He also describes several Eriosyce, including several that grow underground belonging to the subfamily of Thelocephala and several wildflowers. He will also present drone footage of populations of Copiapoa solaris, columna-alba, hypogea and dealbata.



Gary Duke is an incumbent on the Board of Directors to the Cactus and Succulent Society of America. He currently assists with auditing the CSSA finances each year and also is a member of the Honors Committee. He has been collecting cacti and succulents for over 50 years. He's an avid collector of cacti and also collects Tylecodons and Dudleyas.

He is a retired Air Force Officer with a doctorate degree in physics. During his military career, he moved his original and ever-expanding collection of less than about 30 plants from Illinois, where he grew up, to Omaha, NE, Dayton, OH (where he started their first C&S Society, which is now defunct), San Pedro, CA, Montgomery, AL and Albuquerque, NM where he had been show chairman. He has also been President of the South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society and the Long Beach Cactus Society.

Following his military career, he worked as a program manager for Boeing for 16 years. He has over 1000 different species in his private collection and enjoys propagating them. He frequently gives slide presentations throughout southern California, including being invited to speak at the Huntington Botanical Gardens and at the Denver Cactus and Succulent Society. He has traveled to Aruba, Peru, Baja Mexico, and Bolivia twice and just recently returned from Argentina and Chile to see cacti and succulents in habitat.

FROM THE PREZ:**Hi Members,****Holiday Season**

We hope you had a wonderful holiday with your friends and family. It was amazing to see so many of our members at the Holiday Party this year! The room was packed with over 80 people who came together to celebrate. The dinner this year was a huge success, with everyone saying that the pasta was tasty and a great idea. Took us a moment to figure out the serving aspect but then we got it rolling. Thank you to our serving crew (Mary Drumheller, Linda Olivas, Michele Roberts, Christeen Abbott-Hern, and Rosanna Rojas) for working the event. A HUGE thank you to Nancy Jobin and Pat Schreyer for decorating the room and tables getting dinner supplies, organizing the drinks and desserts, and everything else that was done to make the evening special.

This was our first in-person Silent Auction in years, and it went fairly well. We had a wonderful assortment of items to bid on, with the majority being donated by members. The auction brought in a whopping total of \$1,533!!! Thank you to everyone who donated and bid on items. We hope you had fun and enjoy the items you won.

Happy New Year!

A new year is here, and we will be ready! We have exciting events planned throughout the next year that you won't want to miss. Mark your calendars now for the Fresno Home & Garden Show, March 1-3 and our Club's Annual Show & Sale, June 8-9. These are our two largest events, so plan now on being there. They are a fantastic opportunity for finding new plants. Also thinking about setting up time to volunteer at each event, as having people help is the only way these events can take place. 2024 is already shaping up to being a great year!

Reminder, Membership Renewals Are Due By The End Of January.

Starting February, we drop past due members from the newsletter list. Please use the membership form attached to this newsletter to either bring a copy to the next meeting or mail a copy to the address listed on the form.

January 4th is the first meeting of the new year. We hope you can make it out to see a wonderful presentation by Gary Duke. As a reminder, now that we are into cold and flu season, if you have any signs of a cold or flu, please skip the meeting. We must watch out for our older members and anyone with health issues.

We wish you a safe, healthy, and Happy New Year!*Thank you,**Robert***Club Dinner: Blast and Brew, 799 West Palmdon, Fresno****4:45 p.m. Reservation****Reservations under Fresno Cactus Society****Contact Rosanna Rojas by phone, text, or email. (559) 999-0017****Michelle will be taking my place as I will not be attending.**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Alisha Peña (1st)
James Simpson (1st)
Dominic Ortiz (4th)
Jefferson Birrell (6th)
Nancy Godwin (6th)
Sandy Yates (8th;

Carol Sierra McLachlin (11th)
Abby Johnson (12th);
Dennis Shamlan (13th);
Christeen Abbott-Hearn (16th)
Mark Muradian (20th);
Juergen Vespermann (21st)
Tony Sharp (25th);
Micah Garrison (27th)
Carole Grosch (31st)

NEW YEAR'S PLANT RESOLUTIONS

Get to know your plants better: their names, where they come from, what conditions they like.

Propagate your special plants. Share them with other growers (who knows, you might have to ask them for a piece back someday.) Share your plants in other ways: bring them to the Brag Table or show them off on the club Facebook page; send photos and/or articles to the newsletter editor.

What are your resolutions?

The CSSA webinar last month on succulent bonsai was really a terrific program. The presenter, Al Kline, has a very interesting website: www.botanicwonders.com

The California Agave council is a trade association of California agave growers and distillers which supports the emerging California agave spirits industry. It is headquartered at U.C. Davis.

(Since Davis can't beat CSU Fresno in the wine trade, I guess they can one-up us by making their own tequila. Of course, the only real tequila comes from Mexico.)
www.californiaagave.org

VERY INTERESTING NEW BOOK

A book was published in November which presents a unique look at the world of succulent collecting, legal and illegal:

"The Cactus Hunters: Desire and Extinction in the Illicit Succulent Trade," by Jared D. Margulies, assistant professor, Dept. of Geography, University of Alabama (382 p., black and white illus.; University of Minnesota Press).

The subtitle indicates that this is more than just a rundown of plant poaching instances, which we all know about and abhor. Instead, the author takes readers into the fascinating world of succulent collecting and traces the consequential ways in which the lives of people and plants become entangled.

What inspires the desire for a plant? What kind of satisfaction does it promise? The author suspects it might be found via the roots and workings of the illegal succulent trade. His survey covers the fields of botany, criminology, political ecology, human geography and psychoanalysis. The inquiry starts with succulent thefts from Baja islands to California law enforcement officers infiltrating a South Korean smuggling ring, from scientists racing to discover new and rare species before poachers find them to a notorious Czech "cacto-explorer" who turned a land-locked European country into the epicenter of the illegal succulent trade.

The tale is a blend of international intrigue, social theory, and ecological study, providing a complex insight into species extinction.

There is a very interesting review article of the book in the December 5th *New Yorker Magazine*:

<https://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/inside-the-illegal-cactus-trade>

Have you seen these YouTube videos?

- * Repotting a 200- year- old Christmas cactus
- * A bighorn sheep shows how to open and eat a barrel cactus

The following Plant Highlight article (*Crassula rupestris*) is from the Ruth Bancroft Garden November 2023 newsletter. Photos are by Brian Kemble, used by permission. Sue

Plant Highlight: *Crassula rupestris*

November 2023

Family and region

The Crassulaceae, or Stonecrop Family, is a prominent group of succulent plants, with many genera and species found in various parts the world. The family takes its name from the genus *Crassula*, named by the botanist Linnaeus back in 1753. This genus contains about 194 species (Gordon Rowley: *Crassula, A Grower's Guide*, 2003), and although these occur around the world, they are especially abundant in southern Africa, home to about 150 species. On the whole, they are small plants, although one of the best known is also one of the largest: the jade tree, *Crassula ovata*. While the jade tree has a shrubby growth habit, other *Crassula* species form small rosettes or tufts of leaves, and a few develop long trailing stems. One of the latter is *Crassula rupestris*, occurring widely in the southern and southwestern part of South Africa.



About the plant

Crassula rupestris is a clump-forming plant, found on rocky slopes and on cliffs. It often grows as a dome of many stems, the central ones erect and the peripheral ones sprawling to the side, but in steep locations it may spill downward as the stems elongate. The slender stems are initially supple and about .08 inch in diameter (2 mm), but they later become woody and attain a diameter of up to .2 inch (5 mm), with a length of up to 20 inches (50 cm), though often less than this. At regular intervals along the stem are pairs of opposite leaves, fused at their bases so that the stem appears to pierce them. In this respect, *Crassula rupestris* resembles *Crassula perforata*, but the latter has somewhat longer stems with larger and more triangular leaves. Florally, the two species differ in that *C. rupestris* has shorter and wider clusters of white to pink flowers in the fall, while *C. perforata* has more elongated inflorescences with cream to yellowish flowers in the spring.

The chubby leaves of *C. rupestris* are oval in shape with blunt tips, usually .4 to .6 inch long (10 – 15 mm) and .31 to .48 inch wide (8 to 12 mm). However, this is a variable species, and populations with leaves smaller or larger than this are known. The basic leaf color is light green, gray-green or milky blue-green, with yellowed or reddened margins, but under dry conditions and in exposed locations plants may become quite red. The spacing of the leaf pairs along the stem is variable, but generally the spacing is close in sunny positions, and farther apart with less direct sun.

In cultivation, the cultivar 'Tom Thumb' is often seen, sometimes labeled as *Crassula rupestris* 'Tom Thumb', or sometimes simply as *Crassula* 'Tom Thumb'. This is a small-growing selection of *Crassula rupestris* with white flowers.

(Continued on following page.)

Crassula rupestris is a fall-flowering species, though flowers at other times of the year are also possible. The inflorescence is an extension of the stem on which it is produced, branching and re-branching so that multiple small clusters of flowers are crowded together in a domed or flat-topped group atop the stem. The white or light pink flowers are cupped at the base, with the five petals curled back to expose the five carpels at the center, each tipped with a sticky stigma for receiving pollen, surrounded by the five stamens with their dark brown pollen-bearing anthers. These are small flowers, with the petals only about .16 inch long (4 mm). As with other plants in the Crassulaceae, the carpels mature into seed-bearing follicles that split open when they dry to release the many minute seeds.

Care and maintenance

If provided with good drainage and sufficient light, *C. rupestris* is easy to grow, performing well in pots or in dish gardens as well as in the ground. In nature, it grows in winter-rainfall areas as well as in places with year-round rainfall, so it does not require a dormant period. It can easily cope with brief dips below freezing in winter, but sustained freezes should be avoided.



**Photos by:
Brian Kimble.
Used with
Permission.**



COPIAPOA:

Copiapoa is a genus of cacti native to the coastal areas of the Atacama Desert of northern Chile. It comprises about 20 species and a number of varieties (according to the "New Cactus Lexicon"). The genus is named for the town of Copiapoa, Chile. The plants were first noticed and collected as far back as the 1820s, being referred to *Echinocactus*, as were all globular cacti at the time. Britton and Rose established the genus in 1922 in their work "The Cactaceae".

It is a varied genus, from miniatures only a few centimeters across to others which exceed a meter in height or cluster freely to form large mounds. Some species possess large taproots; others have developed surface root systems very adept in absorbing any available moisture. Plant bodies are variable too, with 10-24 rounded or acute ribs, and it can range in color from green to chalky-blue, slate, to nearly black. The areoles are very pronounced, usually oval, and sometimes very large and woolly. The spine count is variable, even on plants of the same species. As a general rule, there can be 1-12 radial spines, while there may be no centrals or as many as 20. The smaller species tend to have fine spines, but the larger species bear much stouter spines which may be straight or curved and can reach 2" in length. Flowers have a very short tube and appear on the normally woolly center, usually in shades of yellow. The fruits are globular, fairly small, yellowish or gray, and split open when ripe.

The Atacama Desert is probably the driest desert in the world. Average precipitation is less than 0.004" per year. Some specific areas have never, since humans began measuring such things, received any recorded rainfall. Instead, the area is enveloped in daily fog from the cold Humboldt Current that pushes up from Antarctica along the west coast of South America. The fog has been known to reach as far as 20 kilometers inland. Plants native to this area have evolved to trap whatever moisture they can in this environment. Travelers have reported that the fog is heavy enough to wet the soil surface at times.

A lot of cactus growers first became aware of copiapoas back as far as the 1960s and 70s, when collected plants were imported and sold by a number of nurseries. These were mostly the beautiful "white" species, such as *cinerea*, *columna-alba*, *dealbata*, etc. They were sold singly and in clumps. Sadly, most growers had no idea of their cultural requirements and I expect that most of these imported plants did not survive. (It was legal back then to import such plants.)

Culture of seed-raised plants is not difficult. They withstand the heat of summer and the cold of winter (as long as they're kept dry). A well-draining soil mix is required. The larger species are notably slow-growing, while the smaller ones can be grown to blooming size in a few years. (I have a *C. columna alba* from seed, maybe 20 years old, still in a 3" pot.)

Some worthwhile species to grow are as follows:

C. cinerea is one of the most striking of the large growing group, with a cylindrical body when old, up to 20 cm across and maybe 4' high. The new growth appears chalky and the plant has black spines and white gray hair at the crown. Most of us have seen picture of the great clumps of this species growing on the gradual slopes of the Chilean coastal area of Antofagasta. Current taxonomy has the following species as varieties of *cinerea*: *columna alba*, *dealbata*, *gigantea* and *haseltoniana*.

C. hypogaea has a completely brown epidermis, with sparse, short black spines, and a prominent tuberculate structure prominent in spirals. It forms small clumps of stems each about 5 cm or so tall and wide, and flowers at an early age. The following species are considered varieties of *hypogaea*: *barquitensis* and *loui*.

C. krainziana is a beautiful large species characterized by its brown epidermis and dense rows of flexible, bristle-like, white spines down the ribs.

C. humilis is another of the smallgrowing species (including *ssp tenuissima*, according to the Lexicon). It has densely tubercled globular to short columnar stems, getting to about 1.5-2" wide, with short dark bristly spines and brown epidermis. Some species appear to be nearly black. It flowers freely throughout the growing season.

Sue

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2024 CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

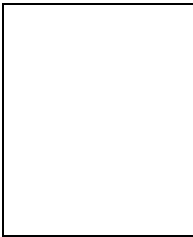
Last updated – 12/16/2024 EMAIL CHANGES TO JGMPLANTS@AOL.COM

- FEB. 9-11** **SAN GABRIEL CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY WINTER SHOW AND SALE**
Sale Fri.-Sat. 8am-5pm, Sun. 8am-4pm Show Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-4pm
Info. Manny Rivera 626-780-6957 or James Lemos 626-201-5519
Arcadia Masonic Center, 50 W Duarte Rd., Arcadia, CA
- FEB. 10** **SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY WINTER SHOW AND SALE**
Balboa Park, Room 101, San Diego, CA Info. call 619-990-2051
- MAR. 1-3** **FRESNO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE**
Daily 10am-5pm Admission free with paid admission to the Fresno Home & Garden Show
Fresno fairgrounds, Garden Pavilion, 1121 S. Chance Ave., Fresno, CA
- MAR. 22-23** **ORANGE COUNTY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE**
Fri. noon-6pm, Sat. 9am-4pm Info. call 657-549-0702
1000 S. State College Bl., (Anaheim United Methodist Church) Anaheim, CA
- APRIL 12- 14** **MONTEREY BAY AREA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE AND JUDGED SHOW**
Fri. 3pm-6pm members only, Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 9am-3pm
Info mbacsspresident@gmail.com or mbsucculent.org
ISTW Portuguese Hall, 124 Atkinson Lane, Watsonville, CA 95076
- APR. 13-14** **SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE**
Daily 9am-4pm Info. www.southcoastcss.org or call 310-346-6206
Palos Verdes Art Center, 5504 Crestridge Rd., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA
- TBA** **LOS ANGELES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SALE**
Info. www.lacactus.com
- APR. 27-28** **SAN JOSE CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE**
Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm Info. www.csssj.org
Peterson Middle School, 1380 Rosalia Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA

(Additional 2024 CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CALENDAR Sales and Shows continued in February newsletter.)

2024

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society



Membership Application: New or Renewal

Annual Membership Renewals Due by January 1st

Single Membership with email newsletter ___ X \$20.00 = ___

Single Membership with paper newsletter ___ X \$30.00 = ___

Family Membership with email newsletter ___ X \$30.00 = ___

Family Membership with paper newsletter ___ X \$40.00 = ___

New / Replacement Name Badges \$5.00 EA. # of Badges ___ X \$5 = ___
(Make sure name/s are printed legibly below)

Total \$ _____

Checks payable to: Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society (FCSS)

Mail to: FCSS – 1890 Nelson Way Kingsburg, CA 93631

INFORMATION FOR CLUB USE ONLY: No personal information will be given out to other parties

Please write legibly

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Check if changes

Contact Phone _____

Email _____

Birthday(s) Optional – Month & Day _____

In the event of a medical emergency at a club function, please list someone we can notify and get personal information from for medical services.

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

VERY IMPORTANT! PLEASE PRINT NAME AND ADDRESS OF ALL MEMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION ON ALL CHECKS AND PAYMENTS TO THE SOCIETY. THANK YOU!

Please read and complete for the Cactus Corner Newsletter

By signing the form below, you give your permission for the use of photographs in the club newsletter and/or to be used for educational purposes including publications, exhibitions, club website and presentations. By giving your permission, you do not give up any copyright or performance rights that you may hold.

No Thank You Yes, I agree to the uses of these materials described above, except for any restrictions noted below.

Signature _____ Date _____