



CACTUS CHRONICLE

October
2012

Visit Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society ONLINE at www.lacss.com

For more information

Contact:

LACSS.contact@gmail.com



Next Meeting: October 4, 2012



Editor: Phyllis Frieze

Contact:

frieze.phyllis@yahoo.com

The Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society is a non-profit organization. Since 1935 our purpose has been the education, conservation, & study of cacti & succulents. The "Cactus Chronicle" is the official bulletin of the Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society, an affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc. Any material in the "Cactus Chronicle" may be copied or reproduced by other clubs on our mailing list, or any non-profit organization, provided proper credit is given to the author and the Los Angeles Cactus & Succulent Society.

LACSS October Program Propagation Workshop Presented by Tim Harvey

At this time of year, many plants in your collection will have grown well, with some having bloomed and produced seed. The main show season, for summer-growing plants, is over. It is an ideal time, therefore, to take cuttings from plants that might need a bit of a trim, and plant seeds that have ripened.

Together, we will look at taking different types of cuttings; this includes offsets and divisions. We will look at what works best for different types of plants, and why.

Growing from seed is a fantastic way to build your collection. Many people think it takes years to get a decent specimen, but that is just not the case. Very quickly, you will come to regard seedlings as your 'babies', and have the chance to pick out the most vigorous and unusual plants to keep for yourself – something the Pros do before you ever get to see any of the plants for sale. The process, starting with cleaning the seed, through sowing and planting up the resulting plants will be demonstrated. Different approaches, including the 'baggie method' will be used.

Members are encouraged to bring some seeds they may have from their plants to sow, OR a plant that they'd like to divide or otherwise propagate, OR a plant that isn't growing as well as they'd like it to, and possibly has problems. Summer is also the time that, along with our cherished plants, bugs and diseases also thrive. Since there will be too many to go through all in the time we have for the meeting, a cross-section will be selected to best illustrate the widest variety possible. Members are encouraged to contribute their tips, questions and suggestions throughout the evening, which promises to be lively and educational for all!

Aloe Seedlings grown by a Local Member



Cactus Seedlings Grown at C&J Nursery in Vista



OCTOBER 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thank you to Cody Coyotee Howard and Tim Harvey for last month's program on Ledebouria and Northern Namibia. Many club members commented on how much they enjoyed Cody's balance of the technical, fascinating, and simply beautiful aspects of the presentation. I, for one, checked out the magnificent Himba Tribe on the internet, which spurred my interest in traveling to Namibia.

Garden Planting Reminder

LACSS takes pride in embracing responsibility for the Sepulveda Cactus and Succulent Garden. We are beautifying, educating, and impacting our community through this service project.

The planting date is Saturday, October 6. Many of you have expressed your willingness to donate cacti and succulents for this garden. Please bring plants you are donating for this garden to the October 4 meeting so that pre-project design can be accomplished. We have obtained some large specimens to anchor the area, and are seeking well-rooted or established plants that will achieve a maximum height of less than about 18" when mature. This might include low barrel and other clumping cacti, low aloes, crassulas, clumping euphorbias, sedums, senecios, kalanchoes, aeoniums, echeverias, and others.

Artie and Chris will begin laying out the plants at around 8:00am, and others can arrive shortly after that. We will have soil amendments, so just bring your shovels, rakes, trowels, and whatever else you can think of.

We will join the Bromeliad Society for lunch at 11:30, as we share several joint members. A big thank you in advance to Mary Carroll and Steve Ball for coordinating our lunch. You made it so easy for us!

Elections

We rely on volunteers like yourselves to make LACSS participation a great experience for all members, and your suggestions are invited. Please let me or Sylvia Strehlo, chair of the nominations committee, know if you are willing to serve as an officer or on a committee. We thrive on your input.

And last, if your last name begins with the letters I, J, K, L or M, please remember to bring snacks to our October 4 meeting. And a big thank you to the E, F, G and H's for providing our delicious refreshments last month.

**Roxie Esterle
LACSS President
Lacss.contact@gmail.com**





Trekking with Ed and Betty: A History of L.A.'s Cactus King and Queen

Part 2

Written by Nils Schirmmacher

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Inveterate plantsman Woody Minnich remembers an eventful trip that he and his wife Connie made with the Gays in September of 1975. The two couples, and Woody's dog, set out for the Sierra Obscura: mountainous country along the western border of the state of Chihuahua. They sought two plants: the floristically endowed *Echinocereus rubispinus*, and the diminutive *Tacitus bellus* (now *Graptopetulum bellus*).

Unfortunately, their excursion coincided with monsoon season. As they drove east from Ciudad Obregon, the temperature was 100°, and the humidity 95%. The warm rains reduced the road to muck, causing the 26-mile drive from Obregon to Obscura to take two lurching days. When Woody encountered a mired logging truck, he put his Land Cruiser

to the test, freeing the truck and trailer from the mud.

After reaching their destination, the group parked and began to hike several thousand feet down into the plants' canyon habitat. The hike would be a two-day descent from juniper forest to subtropical desert.

At the end of their first day, the couples camped in a trailside lean-to. Throughout the night, they were besieged by scorpions attracted to their campfire. The arachnids were so numerous, they each took a turn at "scorpion watch", brushing the critters away from slumbering companions.

The hike's second day rewarded them for their restless night, leading to a canyon where both the *Echinocereus* and *Graptopetulum* were set gem-like within steep stone walls; easily seen but out of reach.

Demonstrating the ingenuity of a determined cactiphile, Woody grabbed a dried *Agave* inflorescence and used it to prod the *Graptopetulum* loose. But the plants disintegrated upon contact, causing a shower of leaves to rain down the grade. Ed matched Woody's ingenuity, quickly removing his shirt to capture the falling leaves. Back home, Woody carefully sowed each leaf, and proudly recalls that every one of them took root, an effort that introduced the plant to cultivation.

While today's CSSA and its affiliates promote conservation, and forbid all field collection, trips such as the one described remain a contentious part of its history.

Now dedicated to strictly photographic expeditions, Woody Minnich shares his field experience with presentations featuring plants and the arts and culture of indigenous peoples. He cites Ed and Betty Gay as mentors that instilled the importance of a grower's experience within the locales their plants call home.

Through articles and slide presentations of their journeys, Ed and Betty repeatedly endorsed adventure in the service of informed cultivation. Their message may be more easily understood than practiced, as it requires the cactiphile to temper an explorer's zeal with the measured care demanded by the greenhouse. The Gays' horticultural partnership embodied this balancing act, with Ed's boundless enthusiasm in tandem with Betty's rigor. The combination was key to the couple's success in realms floral, and serves as a model for those seeking Edens of their own.

RANCHITO REMEMBERED

The Gays' geographic exploration expanded further with field trips to Chile. As a result, Ed added the cacti of that country to his collection of plants from Mexico, the desert Southwest, and the monstrose and variegated oddities that he fancied. These travels are reflected in the "Ed and Betty Gay Award" for Best Chilean Cacti, given at the Inter-City Show: the largest cactus and succulent show in the world. Ed's passion for crested plants can be found in two Best Crest trophies bearing the couple's names: one given at the CSSA Show, the other at the Inter-City Show.

The material gathered on the Gays' explorations combined with their connections to leaders in the field to produce an extensive collection. Living on a sloping half-acre in Tarzana, the couple planted the majority of their treasures in outdoor beds terraced into the hillside. Mimicking a botanical garden, the plants were first organized by country of origin, then changed to groupings by genera. Arranging the collection by name was a good idea, remembered Betty, until a plant's taxonomic status changed and Ed was forced to retrieve his shovel.

With Ed focusing on the propagation of cacti, and Betty on succulents, the Gays' collection evolved into a home nursery. Around 1975, they opened the "Cactus Ranchito" and sold plants from their Tarzana address. In addition to material grown from their own stock, Ed and Betty were among the first to offer Madagascan rarities discovered by Werner Rauh, and new-to-the-trade South African species being propagated by Chuck Hansen of Arid Lands. Each of the factors made the Ranchito a destination for collectors.

The nursery attracted a younger generation of hobbyists with whom the couple shared their enthusiasm and knowledge. Many of their names are recognizable as leading members of the LACSS and CSSA. Three term LACSS president, Artie Chavez, remembers his grandmother taking him to the Ranchito when he was ten. Betty was impressed, as the young Artie showed up with an itinerary of nurseries, the Gays' being just one stop on an extended spree. During the visit, Betty helped Artie choose several plants, and the Gays continued to mentor the novice after he joined the LACSS. Their friendship continues to this day.

Lifetime LACSS member Chris Rogers recalls the Ranchito's gracious spirit: "If it was lunchtime and the Gays were sitting down eating, they'd invite you to the table and offer you something. They were those kind of people".

This generosity is echoed by former CSSA journal editor, Duke Benadom, who remembers the Ranchito as a nursery whose modest prices were motivated by a desire to promote the hobby.

Sadly, Ed suffered a stroke in 1989, leaving him dependent on Betty's care. Having to look after her husband, she could no longer tend to their plants, or operate the nursery. Betty decided to sell their collection to Don Newcomer, proprietor of Serra Gardens in Malibu.

Duke Benadom remembers that the sale proceeds were donated to the LACSS and CSSA. After the bulk of the collection was gone, Betty invited club members to her home to take what remained. During this clean up, Duke came across a plant that he and his wife Kaz had gifted to Betty years before. He was surprised that she had kept it: a beginner's

Specimen with little horticultural value. When Duke asked why she still had the plant, Betty said she never considered parting with something given by a friend.

After living under Betty's care for eight years, Ed died in 1997 at age 82.

Inspired by a single plant collected in Gila Bend, Ed and Betty Gay followed their passion for cacti and succulents to become club leaders at local and national levels. The field trips, conventions, presentations, and publications that they authored and administered impacted the culture of the plants they loved. Betty is highly regarded for her work to attain non-profit status for both the LACSS and CSSA: work that may not share the limelight with the discovery of new species, but allows such discoveries to continue. While they were at the center of all these activities, the Gays also served as guides, mentors, and friends to many. For their dedication, Ed and Betty both received the CSSA's Superior Service Award in 1989.

At 92 years of age, Betty Gay maintains a spry demeanor and sharp wit. When asked if she had felt obliged to cultivate the plants that were named after her, she quipped, "Only if they were easy".

Her experience in the field became apparent when asked advice for those new to the hobby. After a moment's thought, she replied "Succulents are interesting because they are survivors: learn how they cope with adverse conditions".

Looking back on Ed and Betty's life together, these insightful words can be applied to both plants and the people who tend them.



LACSS Membership Form (Please print the following information)

Name _____ Phone _____

Name of Additional Members: _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

E-Mail Address _____

Send me the newsletter by E-Mail Send me the newsletter by U.S. Mail(\$5 extra fee)

Send me a plastic name badge (\$6.50 each)

Type of Membership: New Member Renewal

- Single Membership \$20 annually \$10 1/2 year (July or after)
- Family Membership \$25 annually \$12.50 1/2 year (July or after)
- Newsletter by U.S. Mail \$5 fee in addition to the membership charge
- Cash Check: number _____

Special Interests _____

PO Box 280581, Northridge, CA 91328

Monthly Meeting Refreshments

Each month different members whose last name begins with a particular letter are requested to furnish refreshments for the club. Below is the list, by month, for 2012.

January	T U V W X Y Z	July	T U V W X Y Z
February	A B C D	August	A B C D
March	E F G H	September	E F G H
April	I J K L M	October	I J K L M
May	N O P Q R	November	N O P R
June	S	December	HOLIDAY PARTY

Members were selected by the approximate number of members attending each meeting.

**Refreshments for the month of September are members whose last names
I, J, K, L, M**

OCTOBER 2012

FROM THE STACKS OF THE LIBRARY

Most of the time, when we first get hooked on a new hobby, we jump in and absorb all we can, - randomly and without focus. The next thing we do is get caught up in the excitement of the newest, rarest exotic, the latest hybrid, the most distant and exotic countries. We collect, catalog, cultivate, share, and even show our prized treasures. And then, one day, as we are driving north on the 101 on our way to Camarillo, we look to the side and say "What are those plants? How long have they been there? Why haven't I seen them before?" And we remember that in our own backyard are many genera of cacti found only in the southwest United States /Mexico area. The common name for one local genus is Prickly Pears, aka Opuntia, and is the name of our newest book.

The Introduction is most informative covering basic topics such as spelling, what Prickly Pears are & why they are important, naming ,traditional uses, areoles, how to tell Prickly Pears from other similar looking plants, and comparing various Prickly Pears' fruit, flowers and spine.

Descriptions of the plants are grouped by size - from tree size, large shrubby, low growing, cold-hardy. The description of each species includes the common name followed by the scientific name(s), habitat range, and a bit of taxonomic history. Also included, is 5 photos (habitat, stem segments, spines, flowers, and fruit) for comparison to the other species. This is a great book for novices (and advanced) who can't tell one prickly pear from another! This beautiful, well-organized book is for all us who have been bitten by a Prickly Pear spine and didn't know who it was.

Just a reminder that we have several newer books available in addition to the large collection of CSSA Journals and that you should stop by the Library table and Check it out!

Joyce the Librarian



LOS ANGELES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
NEW PLANT OF THE MONTH POLICIES for 2012

Competition Divisions:

Rookie: 0 – 25 combined 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place “rookie” award points
Novice: 1 - 100 combined 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place “novice” award points
Advanced: Over 100 combined 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place “novice” award points
Master/Open: Any experienced grower may compete in this division, but this is required for individuals who **sell** at shows outside of LACSS.

Submissions:

Members may submit up to three plants in each designated monthly cactus and succulent category. In the Advanced and Master/Open divisions, members must have cared for their plants for at least 1 year. In the Novice division, the ownership requirement is 6 months. Rookies may show newly purchased plants. Entries should be labeled and placed on the display table by 7:00 pm.

Judging Criteria:

Plants are evaluated according to the following guidelines:

Condition (health, form, damage-free)	50%
Maturity and size	25%
Staging (complementary container, top dressing, composition)	20%
Nomenclature (identification and label)	5%

Other factors include rarity, growing difficulty, and whether or not the plant is in flower.

Awards:

First place	6 points
Second place	3 points
Third place	2 points
Other submissions	1 point per plant to acknowledge entry

Entry slips are collected by the 2nd Vice President in charge of Plant of the Month who coordinates tabulation, record keeping, and publication in the *Cactus Chronicle*.

Annual cumulative prizes are awarded at the **Holiday Party in December** to the top three scorers in each division for cacti and for succulents. Additional prizes are awarded for overall total scores from highest to lowest across all divisions. Every individual who has brought plants during the year is acknowledged with a prize. Individuals who “graduate” from one division to the next for the following year will also be recognized.

Plant-of-the-Month

	<i>Cacti</i>	<i>Succulent</i>
January	Mammillaria	Othonna & Senecio
February	Monstrose and Crest	Monstrose and Crest
March	Variegates	Variegates
April	Echinocereus	Haworthia
May	Echinopsis	Gasteria
June	Cephalium bearing cacti	Adenium
July	Eriosyce	Cyphostemma
August	Favorite	Favorite
September	Gymnocalycium	Euphorbia - Caudiciform Type
October	Parodia (includes Notoactus)	Stemless Mesembs - no Lithops
November	Frailea & Blossfeldia	Tylecodon
December	<i>Holiday Party</i>	<i>Holiday Party</i>

OCTOBER EVENTS

NO EVENTS THIS MONTH

SEPTEMBER NEW MEMBERS

David Le
Eric Miller
Diane Miller

September Plant of the Month Winners

Novice Division		
Succulent - Caudiciform Euphorbia		
Award	Name	Plant
First	Jim Esterle	Euphorbia ornithopsis
Second	Ronit Weiss	Euphorbia suzannae
Third	Jim Esterle	Euphorbia namuskluftiensis
Cactus - Gymnocalycium		
First	Sylvia Strehlo	?
Second	Sylvia Strehlo	?
Third	Sylvia Strehlo	?
Third		
Advanced Division		
Succulent - Caudiciform Euphorbia		
Award	Name	Plant
First	Eric Winegar	?
Second	Eric Winegar	?
Third	Rio Cernak	Euphorbia persistens
Cactus - Gymnocalycium		
First	Cheryl White	Gymnocalycium denudatum
Second	Cheryl White	Gymnocalycium horsortii
Third	Rio Cernak	Gymnocalycium cardenasianum
Third	Rio Cernak	Gymnocalycium pflanzii
Open Division		
Succulent - Caudiciform Euphorbia		
Award	Name	Plant
First	Norma Lewis	Euphorbia francoiss
Second	None	
Third	None	
Cactus - Gymnocalycium		
First	John Matthews	Gymnocalycium obductum
Second	None	
Third	None	

Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society
Cacti of the Month October 2012 – *Parodia* (includes *Notocactus*)

The genus *Parodia* now incorporates the genus *Notocactus*, and in modern references, all *Notocacti* have been moved into *Parodia*. The number of species has also been greatly reduced. The original distinguishing characteristic was the red stigmas in the flowers of *Notocactus*, and the yellow stigma in those of *Parodia*. The distinguishing characteristic between the two genera evolved over time, eventually becoming a minor difference in the attachment of the seed to ovary. *Parodia* has swept up several other genera, and is likely to grow and swallow a few more as botanical and genetic studies continue.



Parodia formosa

Nonetheless, the two are separate in many seed catalogs, in older reference books, in our shows, and in most of our collections.

Notocactus are South American Cacti, with the genus being centered in Brazil and Argentina. Members of this genus are also spread throughout the Eastern side of the Andes. This genus is easy to grow, growing freely in the spring



Parodia ottonis

through the fall, and going more or less dormant in the during the colder months. Some species will flower in mid winter, and given their native environment, most do better given a little water year around. If watering *Notocactus* in the winter, avoid fertilization or weak growth may result. Some of the more tropical species need protection from colder weather to prevent scarring, but most will take normal Southern California winters without protection.



Notocactus leninghausii crest



Notocactus magnificus

All the species are easy to grow from seed. Seed is available for nearly all the species and from many localities. Fresh seed germinates readily and can grow to a show quality plant in just a few years. Vegetative propagation of the clustering types is easy as well. Cuttings taken during the late spring and early summer root readily and show new growth before the season is over.

The genus *Parodia* are typically globular to cylindrical plants with pronounced ribs. Flowers emerge from the apex of the plant, normally are self-fertile and are generated during the spring and summer. The genus was named for Argentinean botanist, L. R. Parodia. The genus *Notocactus* was folded into *Parodia* relatively recently and this genus also is synonymous *Malacocarpus*, *Brasilicactus*, and *Wigginsia*. The genus *Parodia* now incorporates sixty six species and can be

found in habitat in South America (Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Bolivia).

References:

D. Hunt, **The New Cactus Lexicon**
C. Innes & C. Glass **Cacti**

Tom Glavich February 2003
Edited by Steve Frieze, 2012

Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society

Succulents of the Month October 2012 *Other Mesembs - Aloinopsis, Carruanthus, Dinteranthus, Lapidaria, Pleiospilos*

The Mesembryanthemaceae comprise a distinctive component of South Africa's flora; 63 percent of the succulent plant life and 10 percent of all plant life. Bright colorful flowers are characteristic of these diminutive plants. The best known of the Mesembs are Conophytums and Lithops, although the group consists of 127 genera. This article will focus on the five genera described in the title.

Dinteranthus come from a very small region near but not on the West Coast of South Africa. They resemble *Lithops* in their outward appearance. They are more spherical than *Lithops*, but have the same types of variation of surface texture and color, although without the tremendous variation that are seen in *Lithops*. Most are various shades of white, light beige and gray. *Dinteranthus* need a period of summer dormancy. Attempts to water them during their dormant period will almost certainly result in rot. Seed germination is done in very late summer, when the weather is hot. This gives the seedlings a chance to grow through the winter, building enough storage for the next summer dormancy. They are sensitive to over-watering, even when in full growth, and need a quick draining (low humus) mixture. *Dinteranthus* are often thought of as a 'challenging' genera, but like most horticultural challenges, one well worth mastering. All the species are worth growing. Two of the best are *D. pole-evansii* and *D. vanzylii*.



Dinteranthus vanzylii

Lapidaria grows in an even smaller area, entirely enveloped by the *Dinteranthus* habitat. The plant was once included in *Dinteranthus*, but the seeds and number of active leaf pairs per branch are not consistent with the *Dinteranthus* genus. Seedlings resemble *Lithops* seedlings more than *Dinteranthus*. The main growing season is autumn, and it too is sensitive to over-watering, particularly in the heat of the summer. There is only one species, *L. margaretae*, and only minor variations in body shape and color with locality. As with almost all the monotypic genera, the one species is a spectacular plant.



Lapidaria margaretae

Aloinopsis is a genus endemic to South Africa. This plant forms dense clusters of rosettes. The leaves are small pebble-like beads of green that are textured. *Aloinopsis schoonesii* is one of the best known plants of this genus. It produces a daisy-like yellowish-bronze flower that opens at mid-day. This plant also generates a tuberous root system (also known as a tap root) that ultimately forms a caudex which further enhances the quality of this delightful mesemb. This genus will flourish in filtered sun (bright light at a minimum).



Aloinopsis schoonesii

The genus *Carruanthus* consists of two species; *C. peersii* and *C. ringens* which are found in the Eastern and Western portions of Cape South Africa. *C. ringens* possesses toothed leaves which is not the case with *C. peersii*. As do other Mesembs, these plants produce yellow daisy-like flowers in the spring. *Carruanthus* are subject to rot so a porous well-drained soil mix is a must.



Carruanthus peersii

The last of the five genera to be discussed in this article is *Pleiospilos*. This genus is known to have between 20 to 40 species that can be found in South Africa. One of the most common plants belonging to this genus is *Pleiospilos nelii* also known as the split-rock. The name *Pleiospilos* comes from the Greek word for many specks. The succulent stems are gray-green in color covered with many dark spots. This plant is often submerged in habitat. This plant requires some shade especially in warmer temperatures.



Pleiospilos nelii

Tom Glavich, February 2002
 Edited by Steve Frieze, June 2011

General Meeting starts at 7:00 PM on the **first Thursday** of the month at the Sepulveda Garden Center located at 16633 Magnolia Blvd. in Encino between Hayvenhurst and Balboa.
Set-up and social hour starts at 6:00 PM.

Bring a smile! Make new friends! **GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**

Visit Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society ONLINE at www.lacss.com

Upcoming Program for
October 2012

Propagation Workshop
Presented by
Tim Harvey

First Class Mail

Sepulveda Garden Ctr. 16633 Magnolia Bl. Encino

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