

**August 2013****Plant of the Month**

Stenocactus Bursera,
Commiphora

Refreshments

Letters

U-Z

July New Members

Pat Byrne
Janice B. Lee
Lynn Ruger
Anika Russell
Lauren Stanton
Sonia Villarroel

Editor

Phyllis Frieze
frieze.phyllis@yahoo.com

Visit Us on the web <http://www.lacss.com>

Mission Statement:

The Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society (LACSS) cultivates the study and enjoyment of cacti and succulent plants through educational programs and activities that promote the hobby within a community of fellow enthusiasts and among the greater public.

Our next general meeting is

August 1

Program Title: The Exotic Fauna and Flora of East Africa

Presented by Steve Frieze



Steve Frieze is a past president of the LACSS and has served the club in numerous other capacities during the past 25 years he has been a member. He is currently a partner of Desert Creations, a plant store that sells unusual cacti and succulents. He has traveled to numerous locations that house exotic plants, including Chile, Brazil, and Oaxaca Mexico which he just returned from. This presentation will concentrate on a trip to Tanzania he took three years ago and the wonderful succulent plants and animals that are endemic to this geographic location. You will have an opportunity to see specimen size plants such as Adenias and Commiphoras that overwhelm the senses. In addition, you will be exposed to fauna that you, in many cases, could reach out and touch if you had a touch of insanity. In one instance his tour stumbled across a fully grown lion sleeping the roadway no more than five feet from the vehicle that he was sitting in.

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Marquita Elias

1st VP, Programs

Manny Rivera

2nd VP, Plant of the Month

John Martinez

3rd VP, Special Events

Cheryl White

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LACSS.contact@gmail.com

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Director 1 Odd Years, Membership

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Meeting Refreshments

Leah Imamura

Juana Williams

Monthly Drawing

President's Message—August 2013

Happy Summer! I hope that you have enjoyed the long, relatively cool evenings with your plants. I would like to share a few updates from our July Board meeting.

Mentor Program

John Suci is doing a great job in following up on this initiative. Not only has he formalized our list of mentors, but also, he has 9 members requesting mentoring, as well as a beginners level workshop. Please make certain that he has your name. This is a great opportunity to hone your skills and build your collection.

Sept. 21 Field Trip

John Martinez has announced that our next field trip will be to Desert Creations on September 21. Please mark your calendar and look for the flyer in this *Cactus Chronicle*.

Inter-City Show

The inter-city show at the Arboretum is August 17 and 18. We host this show in partnership with the San Gabriel Club and the Long Beach Club, thus: Inter-City. LACSS members need to sign up to work shifts and bring plants for the various competitions and displays. If you can't make the drive twice, partner up with another LACSS member to bring your plants one direction. John Matthews will be taking sign-ups for work shifts at our August meeting.

Affiliation with California Garden Clubs, Incorporated

The Board voted that LACSS affiliate with the California Garden Clubs, Incorporated. As a member of their San Fernando Valley District, we can participate in CGCLI shows, conventions, awards programs, community service projects, and receive their publications. In addition, through this affiliation we can obtain our 501(c)(3) status, using their guidance to make necessary updates to our bylaws. We look forward to this new relationship and will be passing on more updates in the near future.

Elections

As the end of the year approaches, elections are on the horizon. The offices which are open include President, Treasurer, Vice President of Special Events, and one Director. I hope I speak for all Board members when I say that serving on the Board is a great opportunity to learn, participate, and get to know amazing, knowledgeable individuals. For me, the past few years as President have been extremely rewarding, and I look forward to continuing on the Board in the role of past president. A nominating committee is being constituted under the leadership of John Suci, and we invite anyone wishing to further be involved with our team to speak up! Tremendous talent is lurking among our over 200 members.

We have been a little light on refreshments, especially with so many attendees at our meetings. While we especially appreciate Kim Thorpe's willingness to supplement the treats, we still need snacks from the membership. The refreshments for the August meeting are designated for letters **UVWXY** and **Z**. Thank you!

Roxie Esterle

President

A heartfelt Thank You for all those who participated in
the 2013 Drought Tolerant Plant Festival

As Co-chairs of this year's indoor show, we would like to thank all those who participated by providing educational displays, individual plants and plant collections for the club displays, and assisting in the tremendous tasks of putting the entire event together.

The success of events like this is dependent on member participation and as a result of those members who stepped forward helped make this year's Drought Tolerant Plant Festival as interesting, informative and as successful as ever.

We would like to start by giving a special thanks to our club President Roxie Esterle for her leadership, Artie Chavez for his vision, and Kim Thorpe for her endless energy.

We also want to recognize the following members for providing the educational displays for the indoor show:

Steve Ball (Dyckias), Sandy Chase (Sansevierias), Artie Chavez (Children's Learning Center) Marquita Elias and Kyle Williams (Aeoniums), Roxie and Jim Esterle (Euphorbias), Barbara Hall (Pelargoniums), John Martinez (Aloe hybrid), John Matthews (Lithops), Eric Miller (succulent plants of South Africa), Nancy Neymark (Columnar cacti), Chris Rogers (Variegated Agaves), and Cheryl and Frank White (Agaves and their many uses).

The incredible list of volunteers who made this year's event a huge success came together and include:

Rita Aken, Sandy Alphonse, Ilona Buratti, Kathryn Boorer, Martha Cantos, Teresa Campbell, Mary Carroll, Mary Chan, Sandy Chase, Jackie Cohen, Roger Cohen, Bob Coleman, , Daryon Collison, Kristen Dmitruk, Danielle Duboff, Rosemary Ecker, Jim Esterle, Reatha Hirsch, Richard Just, Sandy Just, Brenda Kanno, Leni Koska, David Le, Norma Lewis, Diane Miller, Clay Ontiveros, Gene Oster, Laura Oster, Susan Phillips, Phyllis Polakow, Rosemary Polito, Gerald Richert, Kiki Richert, Georgia Roiz, Richard Roosman, Merkie Rowan, Steven Rudolf, Sylvia Strehlo, Roberta Suber, Bob Thille, Carol Thille, Erika van Auken, Ronit Weiss, and Natalie Welsh (our apologies for any participants we may have missed).

We would also like to recognize the San Fernando Valley Bromeliad Society and the Sansui Kai Bonsai Club for their participation and their ongoing support. The well thought-out and aesthetically presented displays provided by these organizations added greatly to the overall look, interest, and success of the indoor show.

We also welcomed the participation of the Woodland Hills Rock Chippers and the California Tortoise and Turtle Club, who delighted our visitors.

Thank you all

Indoor Show Co-Chairs
Joyce Schumann
John Martinez



**LACSS
Mentoring Program Update
August 2013**

This is an update on the Mentoring Program. At the July meeting we received 9 requests for mentoring, most were for general information and Gasteria/Haworthia.

Based on this input:

Artie Chavez and Steve Frieze have agreed to host a General Information session at Steve's home in North Hills. Information will include basic plant care, transplanting, light, watering and other topics.

Scott Schaffer has also agreed to host a discussion on Gasteria and Haworthia.

Dates, times and locations for these programs will be announced.

This program is an excellent opportunity for new members, as well as longerterm members to learn from our experts.

Attached are the Plant Families and Topics for which mentors have been identified. We will circulate another sign up sheet at the August meeting for those who want to take advantage of this program. If you are unable to attend the August meeting and wish to sign up for the program, please contact me directly.

We welcome feedback and suggestions on how this program could be more helpful.

Thanks,

John Suci
Johns.three@gmail.com
818-429-1647

LACSS Mentoring Program

Plant Families and Topics

Plant Families

Agave
Aloe
Asclepiad
Bromeliad
Bulbs
Cacti
Caudiciform
Conophytum

Euphorbia
Gasteria
Haworthia
Mesem
Pelargonium
Orthonna
Succulent trees
Xeric bulbs

Topics

Collection quality improvement
General Information
Plant care, transplanting, light, watering
Hybridization
In house coaching
Home tours

Landscaping
Pests
Propagation-seed, root & leaf
Seed raising
Staging
Trouble shooting

Plant of the Month

2013

August

Stenocactus Bursera,
Commiphora

September

Astrophytum Dorstenia-
Ficus

October

Cacti from Coahuila
Crassula

November

Crest-Montrose Crest-
Montrose

December

Holiday Party

2014

January

Mammillaria without
hooked spines
Pelargonium

February

Columnar Cacti
Aloe Hybrids

March

Opuntias (So. America)
Agave

April

Gymnocalycium singles
Yucca, Nolina,
Calibanus, Beaucarnea

May

Buiningia, Uebelmania
Mesembryanthemaceae
(other than Lithops &
Conophytum)

June

Favorite, Favorite

July

Escobaria, Corypantha
Cucurbitaceae

August

Obregonia, Strombo-
cactus, Echinomastus
Fockea, Raphionacme,
Brachystelma

Plant of the Month - July Winners

Succulent -- Euphorbia (non-Madagascar)

Rookie Division

First Danielle Duboff Euphorbia obesa

Novice Division

First Eric Winegar Euphorbia decepta
Second Eric Winegar Euphorbia tuberculata
Third Eric Winegar Euphorbia squarosa

Advanced Division

First Sandy Chase Euphorbia stellata
Second Kim Thorpe Euphorbia meloformis
Third John Martinez Euphorbia obesa

Open Division

First John Matthews Euphorbia obesa

Cactus - Opuntia

Rookie Division

First Danielle Duboff Opuntia sp.

Advanced Division

First Kim Thorpe Opuntia nuda
Second John Martinez Opuntia sp.
Third Kim Thorpe Opuntia sp.

Open Division

First Norma Lewis Opuntia cylindrica crested

Correction: In the March POM table, second place for the Rookie Succulent, Haworthia cuspidata, was incorrectly reported as Danielle Duboff. The correct owner is Diane Miller. We apologize for the error.

Inter City Show and Sale August 17-18, 2013

By now you should have identified all your show plants and repotted as needed. Don't wait until the day before you bring your plants to the show to water them. Wet plants leave stains on the tablecloths that don't seem to come out. All those great plants you entered in our LACSS show and the CSSA show should be a good start. There is novice, advanced and open categories so don't feel intimidated. We have 103-108 show tables to fill so bring lots of show plants. You may want to bring a little extra of each top dressing you use to handle those travel mishaps. Don't forget the Golden Sweeps so you may want to bring 3 or 4 plants in a category. Plant entry times are Wednesday, 8/14, 1:00 to 7:00, Thursday, 8/15, 9:00 to 9:00, and on Friday, 8/16, 9:00 to 5:00. Removal starts at 5:00 on Sunday, 8/18. You may want to bring extra packing material for take-out since things may not pack as well going home in the rush.

Dinner always sells out so contact Evelyn Stevens at 626-303-1239 ASAP. Dinner is \$30 adults/\$15 for children 5-10 years old and includes tax & tip. If you can't make the dinner you can always just attend the auction. There has been an overwhelming number of auction plants so there is a limit of 2 items per person and you need to notify one of the show chairpersons in advance and you need to attend to be present at the auction.

As one of the three sponsoring clubs, LACSS stands to financially benefit greatly from this show. Correspondingly, we need to step up and volunteer as much as we can to make the show and sale a success. I hope to see very few empty slots on the volunteer signup sheets at the August meeting. Even if you can only donate one hour it will help. If you plan to attend the show, and I hope you do, please try to volunteer at least one hour during your visit. It is a great way to get more involved with the hobby and the show and meet someone new. Active participation in the show is a great learning experience. Everyone should be a clerk, at least one time, for a real insight into how plants are judged. If you're not sure what time you can help, just signup anyway - there is always an opportunity to help out at the last minute. Remember - no experience necessary! If you volunteer or enter plants, you will have access to the sales area for early sales at approximately 2:00 or so on Friday.

Don't forget your LACSS badge. The Arboretum security will be in force.

And buy a show T-shirt at the next LACSS meeting before the price goes up at the show.

A Special Note from Evelyn Stevens, Inter City Show and Sale Treasurer

Hi All, time to make your reservation for the Show Dinner.

Coco's
August 17th
\$30

You may let me know via email or phone (626) 303-1239 and pay on Friday August 16th.

If you wish to mail your reservation request with a check, please make check out to ICCSS and mail to

Evelyn Stevens
216 South California Avenue
Monrovia, CA 91016.

Looking forward to seeing you.



LACSS Garden Tours

Date: September 21 at 10:00 A.M.

First visit the home of Artie and Kim where you will have the opportunity to see their collection of caudiciform succulents and other exotic plants. Call (818) 679-6548 for directions or more information.

Then you are invited to visit the garden of Phyllis and Steve where you will have the opportunity to see the drought tolerant landscaping they have installed. Their home will be open at 12:00 P.M. Lunch will be provided at this location.

Lastly, you will be able to buy plants from Desert Creation's large inventory of unusual cacti and succulents at Phyllis and Steve's. All plant purchases made on this day will be reduced by *20 percent* with *10 percent* of the final purchase price being donated to LACSS.

All collected African Plants are available at these discounts as well as some cacti at more than 40 percent off the original price.

Call (818) 482-8795 for additional information about this event

Walt and Maxine Wegner: Lifelong Partners, Lifetime Members, and Cactus Ramblers

Nils Schirmmacher

PART 2

The dense garden surrounding the Wegner's home reflects their personal histories, and speaks to their many years in the hobby. Greeting visitors at the curb are large specimens of *Opuntia megasperma* and *robusta*, framed by thickets of *Aeonium*, and *Euphorbias millii* and *polygona*. Hovering above the many stems and pads is a plaque that dubs their home *Casa Wegner*—as if Woodland Hills was just another stop on their Baja rambles (photo 1).



Off the sidewalk is a courtyard containing palms, *Plumeria*, and cycads that Walt has proudly grown from seed. The focal points within this subtropical den consist of a life-size figure of Christ and an American flag: reminders of the Wegner's faith and national service. (photo 2).

Beyond the courtyard begins a narrow path crowded with columnar cacti and tree *Euphorbia*, elbowing each other as they reach for the San Fernando Valley sky (photo 3). Identifying the many species here—*Echinopsis pachanoi*, *Lophocereus schotti monstrose*, *Euphorbia ingens*—requires some major neck craning, but the awkward posture has never been so inspiring: each specimen has been in the ground for as long as the Wegners have owned their home. (since ??)



The tightly knit plantings continue through the backyard, and snake around the home's northern wall. Walt and Maxine have composed the beds with care, placing smaller specimens in the foreground and larger plants at the rear. A handrail winds along the garden path, its support appreciated when stooping to take in a *Mammillaria* flower, or arching to spy the undulations of a *Lophocereus*. The garden terminates in a small hothouse containing potted specimens. Prominent on its benches are a mature *Melocactus* and two large *Euphorbia lactea crest*, each a prize-winner recalling the Wegner's devotion to local cactus shows (photo 4).

As of this writing, Walt and Maxine are off on another Mexican adventure, their travel bug showing no signs of waning. This enthusiasm for new people, places, and plants graces our monthly meetings where the Wegner's are a constant presence. I am certain that Walt's smile and Maxine's wit are as infectious in Mexico as they are on this side of the border, and that these traits have allowed them their many returns.



Now that the excitement of our very successful Festival has subsided, we might wonder what excitement is in the future. Well, there is the upcoming Intercity Show and you might need to confirm the identity of one of your entries or just learn about something new you saw at the CSSA Show. You know where to go. Yes, the always improving LACSS Library Which segues into the introduction of our newest book....

Title: "*Cotyledon and Tylecodon*" by Ernst van Jaarsveld and Daryl Koutnik. This is an excellent book for novices and scholars alike. The authors offer distribution maps, cultivation helps, including propagation and pest issues followed by several pages on the 400 year history of each Genus. There are descriptions of all 11 Cotyledons and 46 Tylecodons with photos and exquisite illustrations by the late Elise Bodley, whose illustrations are world famous. This book includes an identification key to help you sort through the incredible differences in size, habitat and appearance of both Genera. If you are collectors of the Family *Crassulaceae*, Cotyledon and Tylecodon are must haves to round out your collection. If **not**, read this book and you will see why you need to add these plants to your collection!

In an effort to improve member access to the Library's collection of CSSA Journals, we now have a new bookcase located in the northeast corner of the Garden Center, next to the kitchen door. Artie Chavez designed, built and installed the new book case (Many Thanks to Artie) which we share with the LA Garden Club. We have the right hand side. Our Journal collection begins with the Jan-Feb 1970 issue and continues through today. All issues are organized by year and stored in magazine holders on the narrower, right hand side of the book case. This section is unofficially dubbed "the journal side" because it also houses the "*Euphorbia Journals*," the "*Special Issues*" of the *CSSA Journal*, several issues of "*Cactus and Co*," "*Haseltonia*", and "*Aloe*." If you wish to check out any of these Journals, make sure you bring it to the Library table and turn in the sign-out card.

Our never seen "Reference Books" now have a home on the left side of our book case and can be accessed at any time. As a reminder, these books can be "referred to" but not be checked out.

By this time next month, our entire Library collection will be housed at the Garden Center. In the past, it has been in my home and I would bring 20 or so books each month. This severely limited your exposure to our incredible inventory! Now all of them will be available for you to browse through all the time. I think many of you will be surprised at how extensive our Library is. We have about 200 titles which covers everything from general topics to specific locations or genera. So...step right up and

Check it out!!

See you soon
Joyce the Librarian

Bursera and Commiphora

Both *Bursera* and *Commiphora* are members of the Burseraceae. *Bursera* are confined to the New World, mostly from Southern California through Guatemala. *Commiphora* are confined to the Old World, mostly South and East Africa and Madagascar.

Both genera have similar cultivation requirements. They all do best when watered in the summer in Southern California. They will all tolerate being left unprotected, outdoors during the winter rains, although some of the *Commiphora* are more sensitive to freezing temperatures, and need protection when freezes occur. Any standard succulent mix will do as a potting medium. Growth is much more rapid when they are fed. If grown in an open mix they can take an amazing amount of water in the summer, and will reward the grower with substantial growth and trunk thickening. All of the plants do well when treated as bonsai, and pruned to expose the geometry and structure of the trunk and bark. Planting in the ground will greatly accelerate the growth rate.



Bursera fagaroides



***Bursera fagaroides* leaf**

Bursera is a wide spread genus, with a range that extends from California into South America. Many of the species are beautiful trees with red or brown peeling bark, rarely seen in cultivation. Some of the tree-like species are very vigorous growers, going from a foot to 6 feet or more in a just two years, in a medium size pot. Most *Bursera* are aromatic, with wonderful woody fragrance from their leaves and bark. Most of the species are worth growing and can be made into show specimens by suitable pruning. Many of the larger species require hard pruning every year to avoid having them turn into trees. Species frequently seen are *Bursera fagaroides* (shown above), *Bursera microphylla*, with very small leaves, *Bursera multijuglans* (with red peeling bark), and *Bursera simplex*. There are many other species from Central and Southern Mexico, and Central America that should be grown and shown.

Commiphora are the African equivalent. *Commiphora* is also a widespread genus, stretching from South Africa through tropical Africa and continuing into Madagascar. Many of the species have peeling bark, although the color tends to run more towards the yellow and brown rather than red.

Vigorous growth is also found in well fed and watered plants. *Commiphora* are aromatic, with fragrances that manage to be both similar and different to *Bursera*. *Commiphora pyracanthoides* is similar to some of the tall growing *Bursera*, and is easily grown from seed. *Commiphora capensis* and *cervifolia* are both occasionally available. Unnamed (or unidentified) species of *Commiphora* from Sudan, Madagascar, Kenya, and Tropical Africa are sometimes available, and beginning to be propagated. Named species are beginning to appear on seed lists and nursery catalogs. The genus is understudied, and there are many species unknown or unidentified.



Commiphora orbicularis

**-Kyle Williams
Special Thanks to Tom Glavich**

Stenocactus



Stenocactus (Echinofossulocactus) phyllacantha

Echino traces to Echinus, which is Latin for Hedgehog, a spiny porcupine-like rodent from Europe, and also, equally likely, and much closer in appearance, a spiny, edible sea urchin from the Mediterranean. Stenos is Greek for narrow, an obvious referral to the many narrow ribs on almost all of the species.

They are all spiny plants, collected much more for the appearance of the spines and the wonderful curved ribs than their flowers, although the flowers can be quite showy. All of the species (there are ten) are very variable, and as a result, there are numerous varieties and forms that can enhance any collection. Most of the species are reasonably small, flowering at two years, when only an inch or so in diameter. A good representative collection can be kept on a table.



Stenocactus vaupelianus

Identifying the species of an *Stenocactus* is as difficult as identifying the genus is easy. For the most part, they tend to look alike, and there are far more names than there are species. However, a few species do stand out.

Stenocactus and *Echinofossulocactus* are the same genus. The name of this easy to grow and uniquely ribbed genus has been a subject of contention since the 19th century. The genus was originally described in 1841 by George Lawrence, but the description was invalid. It was re-described in 1898 by Karl Schumann. Various attempts to straighten out the names went on for the next hundred years. With blessings from the Committee for Spermatophyta, (no one else knows what it means either), Kew Gardens, and the International Cactaceae Systematics Group, the name *Stenocactus* seems to have finally triumphed.



Stenocactus (Echinofossulocactus) tricuspdatum

Stenocactus are native to Central to Northern Mexican. The genus is closely related to *Ferocactus*, differing by the lack of nectar glands, the lack of a ring of hairs above the stamens, and size.

Stenocactus grow in grass lands, and need some protection from full sun. They are easy to grow, putting on most of their body weight each year in the early spring to summer. Plants growing outdoors will grow slowly during the winter using just the water from winter rains. It is important not to fertilize during the darker days of December, January or February, or etiolation or stretching of the body will occur. The narrow ribs, the wooly areoles, and the dense spines are an ideal habitat for mealy bugs. Frequent inspection of the plants will prevent them from spreading. Older plants sometimes get corky near the base. Keeping the plant in continuous growth delays this, but in some species the cork is inevitable.

Kyle Williams
Special Thanks to Tom Glavich



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General Meeting

August 1

Program Title: The Exotic Fauna and Flora of East Africa

Presented by Steve Frieze

August 2013 Sales and Events

August
17 & 18

28th Annual Intercity Show & Sale
The LA County Arboretum, 9am-5pm Daily 301 No. Baldwin Ave
Arcadia, CA

Info:-TOM GLAVICH 626-798-2430 or JOHN MATTHEWS 661-297-5364