

On the Dry Side

Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society

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Mexican Grass Tree
Dasylirion longissimum
 UC Botanical Garden
 at Berkeley

President's Message

Our bylaws provide for elections in odd-numbered years of board members for two-year terms. This issue of *On the Dry Side* includes the nominations for members of the board of directors, as preparation for additional nominations from the floor and elections during our November meeting. Newly elected officers will be seated at the December meeting.

The nominees are presented on p. 2 of this newsletter. Please look at these candidates, and consider nominating any additional candidates, including your self during the meeting. This society, like all community organizations, values the active participation of its members, and welcomes those who step forward to serve in positions of leadership.

Our October meeting occurred during the cactus & succulent sale season, and specifically on the same weekend as the San Jose CCS's sale. Several board members were actively participating in that sale and unavailable to attend our meeting, so we cancelled the October meeting of the board. Accordingly, this newsletter does not include minutes of a board meeting.



Save the Date!

MBACSS Meets

Nov. 19, 2017

Gathering @ 12:00

Potluck @ 12:30

Program @ 1:00

Board Meets

Nov. 19, 2017

Board @ 11:00

Members always
welcome to attend

Future Meetings

Third Sundays

Veterans of Foreign
Wars, Post 1716
1960 Freedom Blvd.
Watsonville, CA

Election of the Board of Directors — 2018 & 2019

Presented by Stan Verkler, Chairperson, Nominating Committee

During the Society’s November meeting, the members will elect ten board members to serve two-year terms that will begin in January of 2018. The Nominating Committee has recommended a slate of candidates for positions on the board. Members will be invited to nominate any additional candidates, and then to vote on the each of the candidates.

Please read the excerpt of the Society’s bylaws, presented at the bottom of this page, which lists the officers of the board of directors and briefly describes their duties.

The Nominating Committee’s recommendations are as follows, with spaces provided for additional nominees:

President	Thomas Karwin (incumbent)	Affiliate Rep.	Jeff Brooks (incumbent)
	_____		_____
Vice-President	Naomi Bloss (incumbent)	Directors at Large	
	_____		Gary Stubblefield (incumbent)
Secretary	Stan Verkler (incumbent)		Sharon Lucchesi (incumbent)
	_____		Sarah Martin
Treasurer	Ruth Pantry (incumbent)		_____
	_____		_____
Membership	Linda McNally (incumbent)		_____
	_____		_____
Immediate Past President	Stan Verkler (ex officio)		

Article V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section A: Members of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall include ten officers: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, membership chair, affiliate representative, three directors-at-large, and immediate past president (ex officio).

Section B: Duties of Officers

1. PRESIDENT presides at all regular and special meetings of the membership and meetings of the board, and appoints special committees as required
2. VICE PRESIDENT presides at meetings in the absence of the president and undertakes the duties of president in all respects when the president is ill, has resigned or is otherwise unavailable.
3. SECRETARY keeps the minutes of regular and board meetings and attends to the correspondence of the Society.
4. TREASURER receives and keeps all the Society's funds and keeps full and adequate records of all receipts and disbursements, Assists the membership chair in collecting annual dues.
5. MEMBERSHIP CHAIR collects all dues, compiles an annual list of current members, and distributes the membership list to all members
6. AFFILIATE REPRESENTATIVE maintains contact with Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) and the California Garden Clubs, Inc., and reports pertinent information to the board and the general membership.
7. DIRECTORS–AT –LARGE (three) attend board meetings and represent the views of the general membership.
8. IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT may be called upon by the President or Board to offer knowledge gained from previous experience,

Section C: Order of Officers

The presiding order of officers of the Society shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chair, Affiliate Representative, Immediate Past President, and Directors-at-Large (3).

Preview of November's Program

Growing and Propagating Hardy Aloes in Northern California

By Ernesto Sandoval

The UC Davis Botanical Conservatory and Ernesto Sandoval have been experimenting with a greater diversity of aloes here in Northern California. Ernesto will share his experiences with growing and propagating some of the aloe species such as *A. comosa*, *melanacantha*, *peglerae*, *hereroensis* and other cool/wet tolerant species. He'll touch on the more available and less available aloes. He will focus his talk on cultivating aloes under northern California conditions and also mention plants that are more suitable for Southern California.

As he always does, Ernesto will bring a selection of uncommon plants and succulents: aloes, *Othonna herrei* & *O. cylcophylla*, *Albuca spiralis* & *A. nelsonii*, *Dorstenia gigas*, *Dendrosicyos socotrana*, *Pseudolithos mccoysi*, *Echinopsis*, *Capparis spinosa*, *Ornithogalum fimbriarginatum* and other bulbs, and other plants. Adding some of these plants to your collection will diversify your garden and help to support the Botanical Conservatory's programs. To encourage quantity purchases, Ernesto will offer \$4 plants at 3 for \$10 or 7 for \$20, and \$5 plants at 5 for a discount to be announced!

Background



For a long time, Ernesto Sandoval has been wondering why plants grow and look the way that they do. Ernesto thoroughly enjoys helping others and gardeners in particular, to understand why and how plants do what they do. He explains and interprets the world of plants to visitors of various ages and levels of experience, from K-12 students to professionals and Master Gardeners. He regularly speaks to western garden societies and succulent groups in particular throughout California and elsewhere. Succulents are his particular interest within his general passion for plants. He describes himself as a "Jose of All Plants, Master of None."

He's been acquiring answers to his many questions about plants by earning his degree in botany at UC Davis and developing over the last 25 years from student worker who weeds & waters to director of UC Davis's Botanical Conservatory. He has immersed himself in the world of biodiversity by growing thousands of types of plants, including many succulents.

He likes to promote plant liberation by encouraging gardeners to grow plants in the ground whenever possible. He loves the technical language of botany, but prefers less formal communication. By helping people to understand the workings of plants he hopes to help us all to understand how and why plants do what they do and how we can maximize their growth with minimal effort.

Aloe bed at U.C. Davis



November's Mini-Show Plants

Selections by Jeff Brook, Information by Wikipedia

Opuntia, Opuntiads

Opuntia is a genus in the cactus family, Cactaceae.

The most common culinary species is the Indian fig opuntia (*O. ficus-indica*). Most culinary uses of the term "prickly pear" refer to this species. Prickly pears are also known as tuna (fruit), sabra, nopal (paddle, plural nopales) from the Nahuatl word *nōpalli* for the pads, or *nostle*, from the Nahuatl word *nōchtli* for the fruit; or paddle cactus.

The genus is named for the Ancient Greek city of Opus, where, according to Theophrastus, an edible plant grew which could be propagated by rooting its leaves.



Opuntia littoralis var. *vaseyi*



Collectively, opuntias, chollas, and related plants are sometimes called opuntiads. Chollas are members of the genus *Cylindropuntia*, which has cylindrical stems, while Opuntias have flat stems.

Gasteria

Gasteria is a genus of succulent plants, native to South Africa (and the far south-west corner of Namibia)

The genus is named for its stomach-shaped flowers ("gaster" is Latin for "stomach"). Common names include ox-tongue, cow-tongue, lawyer's tongue and, occasionally, mother-in-law's tongue.

Gasterias are recognizable from their thick, hard, succulent "tongue-shaped" leaves. Their inflorescence is also unique, with their curved, stomach-shaped flowers, which hang from inclined racemes.

The species of this genus are mostly native to the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, where the bulk of the species occurs—especially in the small area between Grahamstown and Uniondale which enjoys rainfall throughout the year. However distribution of several species extends widely across the low-altitude coastal regions of the country, in an arched horseshoe shape across South Africa.



Online Resources



The September 2017 issue of The Cactus Explorer was posted recently (a little late) for free downloading. Editor Graham Charles welcome "...articles about exploring for plants, reviews of genera or species, historical literature, and pictures of unusual plants in culture."

Cover photo:

Oreocereus pseudofossulatus flowering in Bolivia.

This issue includes Regular Features, plus these articles:

- *Matucana aurantiaca*
- Travel with the Cactus Expert
- *Cylindropuntia* *~* *anasajensis*
- What about *Opuntia orbiculata*?
- In the shadow of Illumani

This issue is particularly timely because of its articles about an *Opuntia* and a *Cylindropuntia*, both of which are featured in our monthly mini-show. The Cactus Explorer is a extraordinary free resource for succulent gardeners. To download this issue and several previous issues, click [here](#).

In Members' Gardens

Garden Photos contributed by Society Members



Tom Karwin's Garden

Work is in progress to develop a front yard display of agaves. The roughly semi-circular bed is 25 feet wide and 15 feet deep, and slightly mounded. For several years, this bed had a motley collection of plants dominated by dwarf evergreens.

The new landscape will be almost entirely agaves, plus a Desert Spoon (*Dasyliirion wheeleri*, an agave relative), and a Mangave or Macho Mocha, which is a bigeneric hybrid (*Agave x Manfreda*). These two are already in place. Spacing of several small plants allows for their mature sizes.

Remainders from the old landscape can be seen in the upper right corner of the bed. (1) A lone Golden Barrel Cactus (*Echinocactus grusonii*), a Mexican native that might stay with more recently acquired specimens. (2) A smattering of Rain Lilies (*Zephyranthes candida*), natives of Argentina and Chile. They are destined for the Chile bed in a different part of the garden. I've already moved a many of these plants.

A related bed in development, shown in the upper right corner of the photo, will include larger agaves and agave relatives. Featured plants will include a Mexican Grass Tree (*Dasyliirion longissimum*, another Agave relative) and an inevitable White-striped Century Plant (*Agave Americana var. medio-picta 'Alba'*). Already in place is a Mexican Daisy Tree (*Montanoa grandiflora*) in full bloom.

Excerpt from "Introduction to Agaves", by Geoff Stein, 2012 (Dave's Garden)

"These primarily Mexican plants come in many different sizes and colors, though the general look is an elegant symmetrical rosette made up of spiny, succulent, often stiff and well-armed leaves with little or no stem. Some plants get large, up to 20 feet in diameter, while others may barely exceed a few inches. Some are soft and spineless- quite "user-friendly" while others are indeed dangerous plants to be too near, armed with sharp, stiff hooks and dagger-like terminal leaf spines. Most are fairly easy to grow and take little care once established.

"And, since many species offset freely, there are dozens of species readily available at local nurseries or online for reasonable prices. This is one of the faster-growing succulents so starting off with a small seedling does not mean you will have to grow old in order to see your plants mature to adult size. Agaves also come in a variety of colors and are excellent 'decorator' plants for those who need a hardy plant with a predictable shape but needs a plant to match a certain color scheme. Needing little water and little fertilizer, agaves are plants that require little attention yet reward the grower with a unique southwest look and artful presence."

Wikipedia

The Agave genus, which includes 208 species, is one of 23 genera within the Agavoideae subfamily of the Asparagaceae family. Familiar relatives of the agave include Beschorneria, Camassia, Furcraea, Hesperaloe, Hosta, Manfreda, and Yucca

Monocarpic Agaves

Each agave rosette is monocarpic: it grows slowly to flower only once, and then dies. An Israeli research, Lev-Yadun Simcha, recently challenged this definition by differing between "plant" and "rosette": "The common belief that all Agave L. plants flower only once, i.e., are monocarpic, is partly wrong. The genus Agave is mostly composed of perennial polycarpic clonal plant species that commonly show a strong size and physiological hierarchy between the larger branches (rosettes) that flower once and die, and smaller or younger branches that may later reach a large size or age, flower, and die."

Simcha considers the Agave's offsets to be "smaller branches" on the main plant, rather than "pups." In either case, Agaves that produce offsets (by any name) are reproducing asexually. Click [here](#) for Simcha's full report.

More About Agaves

By Tom Karwin

Many agaves propagate by producing offsets that might be in the soil (“pups”) or on a stalk (axial offsets). These species are called surculose. Some offset sparsely; others do so prolifically. Potted plants reportedly offset quicker than those growing in the ground.

Several other species propagate through seeds. Species that do not produce offsets are called non-surculose or “solitary.”

Some gardeners appreciate the offsets because they can grow more plants to sell, give away, or build their own garden landscape by developing groupings of agaves, which is how they propagate in nature. Other gardeners prefer solitary agaves because they require less maintenance.

The MBACSS Lending Library includes a selection of books with more information about agaves:

- Gentry, Howard Scott Agaves of Continental North America
- Ingram, Steven Cacti, Agaves, and Yuccas of California and Nevada
- Nobel, Park, S. Remarkable Agaves and Cacti
- Pilbeam, John A Gallery of Agaves
- Starr, Greg Agaves

Solitary (or nearly so) Agave Species

By Greg Starr of [Starr Nursery](#)

A while back I was asked if I had a list of agave species that are solitary or nearly so. I have called on my friends at [agaveville.org](#) to help develop such a list, which is presented here. The main criterion being that the species should be solitary or nearly so in habitat since cultivation can cause some wackiness in the plants. Also, only species from Continental North America, so the Caribbean and South American ones are out and no hybrids allowed.

1. *Agave angustiarum*
2. *Agave arcedianoensis*
3. *Agave atrovirens*
4. *Agave aurea* subsp. *aurea*
5. *Agave aurea* subsp. *promontorii*
6. *Agave azurea*
7. *Agave bakeri*
8. *Agave bovicornuta*
9. *Agave chazaroi*
10. *Agave chrysantha*
11. *Agave chrysoglossa* (mostly)
12. *Agave colimana*
13. *Agave congesta*
14. *Agave convallis*
15. *Agave cupreata*
16. *Agave deserti* subsp. *simplex*
17. *Agave dasylirioides*
18. *Agave durangensis*
19. *Agave garcia-mendozae*
20. *Agave geminiflora*
21. *Agave gigantensis* (not imposter *A. sobria*)
22. *Agave guadalajarana*
23. *Agave guiengola* (mostly)
24. *Agave hiemiflora*
25. *Agave hookeri*
26. *Agave horrida*
27. *Agave hurteri*
28. *Agave impressa*
29. *Agave inaequidens*
30. *Agave jaiboli*
31. *Agave kerchovei*
32. *Agave lagunae*
33. *Agave marmorata*
34. *Agave maximiliana*
35. *Agave montana*
36. *Agave moranii*
37. *Agave multiflifera*
38. *Agave nayaritensis*
39. *Agave nuusaviorum*
40. *Agave ocahui*
41. *Agave ornithobroma*
42. *Agave pachycentra*
43. *Agave palmeri*
44. *Agave parvidentata*
45. *Agave pedunculifera*
46. *Agave pelona*
47. *Agave pendula*
48. *Agave polianthiflora*
49. *Agave potatorum*
50. *Agave potrerana*
51. *Agave scaposa*
52. *Agave schidigera*
53. *Agave seemaniana*
54. *Agave shrevei*
55. *Agave temacapulinensis*
56. *Agave thomasae*
57. *Agave titanota*
58. *Agave turneri*
59. *Agave utahensis* subsp. *kaibabensis*
60. *Agave vazquezgarciae*
61. *Agave vilmoriniana*
62. *Agave wendtii*
63. *Agave wercklei*
64. *Agave wocomahi*
65. *Agave xylonacantha*
66. *Agave zebra*

MBACSS Calendar for 2017

MONTH	PROGRAM	CACTUS MINI-SHOW	SUCCULENT MINI-SHOW
1/15	Jeff Moore's New Book <i>Aloes and Agaves in Cultivation</i>	Any columnar cactus must be 12" or taller	Aeonium
2/19	Martin Quigley: Future Fantasy: The succulent collection at the UC Santa Cruz Arboretum	Mammillaria, Escobaria	Euphorbia
3/19	Brian Kemble: North East Mexico	Rebutia (inc. Sulcorebutia), Echinopsis (Lobivia)	Aloe
4/16	Robin Stockwell New Book - <i>Succulents: The Ultimate Guide to Choosing, Designing and Growing 200 Easy-Care Plants</i>	Ariocarpus, Astrophytum	Haworthia
5/20-21	MBACSS Spring Show & Sale, San Juan Bautista		
6/18	Naomi Bloss Early Days of MBACSS	Ferocactus, Blossfeldia	Kalanchoe
7/16	Kelly Griffin: Agaves	Melocactus	Stapelia
8/20	Country Store	No Mini-Show	
9/17	Peter Beiersdorfer Succulent Tidbits from Around the World	Rhipsalis	Adenium, Pachypodium
9/30 & 10/1	MBACSS Fall Show & Sale, San Juan Bautista		
10/15	Russell Wagner	Echinocereus, Parodia	Echeveria
→ 11/19	Ernesto Sandoval: Growing and Propagating Hardy Aloes in Northern California	Opuntia, Opuntiads	Gasteria
12/17	Christmas Party	No Mini-Show	
RELATED EVENTS ELSEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA (AND BEYOND)			
1/14	Desert Forum, Huntington Botanic Gardens, San Marino, CA		
4/29-30	Show & Sale, San Jose CSS, Sunnyvale		
4/29	Plant Sale, Huntington Botanic Gardens, San Marino, CA		
5/6-7	Spring Show & Sale, Sacramento CSS, Sacramento		
5/13	Annual Show & Sale, Santa Barbara CSS, Santa Barbara		
5/20-21	Show & Sale, Carmichael CSS, Carmichael		
5/27-28	Annual Plant Show & Sale, Central Coast CSS, San Luis Obispo		
6/3-4	Summer Show & Sale, Fresno CSS, Clovis		
6/10-11	Show & Sale, San Francisco CSS, San Francisco		
6/30 - 7/2	CSSA Annual Show & Sale @ Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino		
7/26-30	CSSA 37 th Biennial Convention, Tempe, AZ		
8/12-13	31 st Annual Intercity Show & Sale at the LA Arboretum, Arcadia		
9/2	Succulent Symposium, Huntington Botanic Gardens, San Marino, CA		

Succulent Glory

Photographic Impressions at the Succulent Extravaganza by Paul Albert

This page presents more of Paul Albert's impressions of the 2017 Succulent Extravaganza, following the presentation in the September issue of *On the Dry Side*. Paul's photos are also shown on pp. 1 & 9> His photography depicts succulent plants very artistically, and will be included in future issues. We invite more members to share their photos.



©Foto-Gra-fhia-Paul Albert

Officers and Chairpersons, 2017

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT — Tom Karwin
 VICE PRESIDENT — Naomi Bloss
 SECRETARY — Stan Verkler
 TREASURER — Ruth Pantry
 MEMBERSHIP CHAIR — Linda McNally
 AFFILIATE REPRESENTATIVE — Jeff Brooks
 DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE
 — Gary Stubblefield
 — Manson Waters
 — Sharon Lucchesi
 IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT — Stan Verkler

CHAIRPERSONS

LIBRARIAN — Suzy Brooks
 MINI-SHOW — Jeff Brooks
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR— Tom Karwin
 PROGRAMS — Sarah Martin
 PUBLICITY — Sharon Lucchesi
 RAFFLES — Gary Stubblefield
 ROSTER — Ruth Pantry
 SALE — Gary Stubblefield & Lynda Waters
 SHOW—Naomi Bloss & Janet Sparks
 WEBMASTER — Anita Crawley

Members Update

Welcome to two new members who joined after the 2017 Fall Show & Sale. We're glad to have them join our merry band!

Jonelle Verdugo, Salinas

Cecelia Azhderian

We're still planning for a possible trip to the Huntington Gardens (January 12 & 13), so mark your calendar and be ready to commit to the trip as soon as the arrangement details are finalized. We're awaiting action by the San Jose CSS, which initiated the idea and serves as the primary organizer. Bus seats will be limited in number but you could always travel on your own arrangements.

Finally, as mentioned before, we welcome photos of your garden. We're not strictly limited to cacti and succulents, but *On the Dry Side* always favors those plants.

We also welcome articles for publication in this newsletter. If you have written about or photographed a public or private succulent garden you have visited. MBACSS members will be glad to learn about the garden and your experiences and impressions.



On the Dry Side

Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society

<http://mbsucculent.org>