

On The Dry Side

Greeting fellow succulent lovers and MBACSS members,

Well, I was able to separate out all my winter grower succulents from my summer grower succulents. This is my way of attempting to make sure I can identify and not overwater the summer growers. I have a covered patio area where I keep most of my collection, so they are all out of the rain (the ones outside in the ground don't get any special treatment). Everybody seems to be happy for the time being. The list I have of which are winter and which are summer I got from the list that Tom Karwin, our most recent former president, published in the newsletter several years ago and republished not too long ago. Very helpful. Thank you, Tom.



The January membership meeting was attended by a very enthusiastic group, even though we were only 22 people. For the Show and Tell portion, 5 or 6 people brought in plants they shared information about with the group. I learned some new things from the members! Each person who contributed received two plant raffle tickets. Our presenter was Andrew Hazlet from the San Jose Succulent and Cactus Society whose hands-on presentation and samples of grafted plants from his collection showed us new things about grafting. He answered lots of questions and generously shared with the group a number of creatively grafted cacti and he donated several smaller ones to the group and he had some very interesting *Astrophytums* that he grew from seed for sale. There were several folks who were attending their very first MBACSS meeting who got one of Andrew's grafted cacti. Thanks everyone who participated and made it such a fun and successful meeting.

I'm looking forward to the February meeting because we will have another hands-on meeting with our own Stanley Verkler, who is also a former president of MBACSS. He will talk to us about soils, potting, re-potting, sizes of pots to use, fertilizers, etc. He invites everyone who would like to re-pot a plant to bring it in and he will show us all how to remove all the old soil, clean up the plant and put it in a new pot with fresh new soil. You can bring a pot to transplant into or he will have plastic pots for the new planting. Once again, we are invited to bring in a plant to "Show" to the group and "Tell" the group about.

Regardless of the winter weather, I hope to see many of you at this very interesting meeting.

Gratefully,
Mary Louise Cross, President
Monterey Bay Area Cactus and Succulent Society

Photos By
Paolo Albert



APPROVED MINUTES

January 3, 2024

Call to Order: Mary Cross.

Members present: Mary Cross, Nancy Thomsen, Jorge Quiñonez, Lyn MacDonald, Lou Falek, and Meryl Abramson.

Minutes of December 6, 2023: Meryl Abramson. Action items from the minutes reviewed. Minutes accepted as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Lou Falek. December Report and Auction Report accepted as presented. The Board decided that three plants from the Holiday party that were not labeled or claimed will be accepted as a donation to the Club. The Board also decided to add more funds to the current CD when it comes due.

Chairpersons' Reports:

Membership: Lyn MacDonald. Two new members in December. We have a total of 196 members; in 2023, we have added 75 new members in 2023.

Sunshine Committee: Mary Cross. Cards have been sent to Roger Lane, Janet, and David Sparks.

Programs: Jorge Quiñonez. Jorge has provided an initial 2024 program and will provide raffle plants for January. All members who want to provide raffle plants should contact Jorge.

Board discussed concepts and benefits of Mini-shows vs. Show & Tell. January meeting will be Show & Tell. Mini-shows are meant to help members learn to prepare a plant for a show, and help educate all of us as to the various types of succulents available (learn what the plants are); a write-up about the plants, with pictures, for the newsletter would be helpful.

CSSA: Jorge. The Executive Director is stepping down and the CSSA website is getting updated.

Old Business: Holiday party evaluation: All. The party was fun and well-attended. Lyn would like to prepare the main course herself next year, and ask others to bring desserts and/or sides. The plant exchange needs to be done right away or during the meal, to move things along. People brought too many plants for the exchange and/or auction; next year someone should be in charge of asking people to return extras to their car. Initial microphone announcements should be made during the meal. Auction went on way to long, in part due to so many plants. We need a stricter timeline next year and be better organized. We had many new members, and they were offering their help and seemed excited to be there.

Changes for 2024: All. Discussion on one vs. two sales per year. We must pay for 2025 venue by fall. If we change venues, a kitchen and tables must be available. The venue rental is our biggest expense. Publicity continues as a concern, and Peter's web work can help. Nancy's committee will consider these issues.

Library: David will continue as the 'Interim' Librarian until we have another or second volunteer. He has purchased a few books, and he and Nancy have started a 'Library Corner' section in the newsletter to inform our membership about the books.

New Business: The Board thanked Anita for her help with the website. We will be looking for a new webmaster. This could be a great opportunity for a student. CSSA and the S.F. chapter have a nice website.

Board Meeting time change? Wednesday nights are difficult for some. We agreed to change to Sunday evenings two weeks before the General Meeting, still on Zoom and at 7:00 p.m., as a test for now. Jorge has permission to co-host.

Adjournment: Mary Cross

Respectfully submitted by Meryl Abramson

JANUARY MEETING

December 17, 2023

Stan Verkler

Basic Options for Success in Growing Vibrant, Healthy Plants

Stan will discuss with members the pitfalls and environmental needs of growing Succulents in containers. There will be several demonstrations on re-potting, root cleaning and examination, and re-potting soils, emphasizing drainage. If you have a small-medium size plant which has stalled out, or not been re-potted in over a year feel free to bring it to the meeting, so we can look at what it may need. Also bring a box or tray to dump the spent soil so we can dispose of it after the meeting. I will bring in a tray of my soil mix, which can be tweaked with various amendments according to the nutrient needs of a particular species of plant. If you have some pumice, bring in a gallon or so to make a new mix.

We will discuss, drainage, pot size, fertilization, water PH, light exposure, heat needs, and fresh air circulation. Also temporary protection from too much wetness and cold during the winter months. A reminder of these matters is always helpful, even when you have heard it before. Hope you will come with questions, we will give advice, but you will have to experiment also to realize what works best for your growing area.



CLUB NEWS

A Brief Introduction to Succulent Pelargoniums

From an article by Tom Glavich in the Jan-Feb 2015 TO THE POINT

Pelargonium is one of the genera of the Geraniaceae family, along with Geranium, Monsonia and Eriodinium. The flowers of a true geranium are five petaled, and symmetric or nearly so. Pelargoniums have two upper petals that are different from the three lower petals. The genus Pelargonium covers a broad range of habitats from damp and near constant wet to extremely dry desert regions. It includes species that exhibit succulence in some form or another (as well as many that do not). Some species use more than one method of nutrient and water storage. Some have leathery leaves, some have thickened succulent stems, and a surprising number are geophytes, with the plant body mostly underground. The following information applies to those species that are stem succulents.

Most succulent pelargoniums are winter growers, with most growth occurring in mid to late autumn and throughout the spring, until real summer heat starts. Succulent pelargoniums are in general easy plants to grow. They are tolerant of most growing mediums, as long as there is good drainage. They do very well in nonorganic mixes consisting mostly of pumice, or the equivalent, but then require regular feeding. Any commercial plant food will work. Some species can grow too robustly, but respond well to frequent and sometimes severe pruning.



Pelargoniums are generally free of most pests and disease. Occasional aphid attacks will accompany flowering and mealybugs make an infrequent appearance, usually preferring other plants when given the choice.

Succulent pelargoniums are easy to propagate. During the growing season most species need to be pruned into shape. All of the cuttings can be immediately potted up without waiting for calluses to form. They root quickly, often showing fresh growth within a couple of weeks. New cuttings should be treated like your mother's geranium, there really is not that much difference. Some species produce root tubers in addition to the succulent stems. These can be removed and

potted up as well, with the top of the tuber, and a bit of the connecting root just above soil level. These usually re-root and start showing new growth as well sometimes immediately sometimes after a few months or a year. Patience pays with tubers.

CLUB NEWS

Upcoming meetings:

February 18, 2024

Presenter: Stan Verkler
Topic: Repotting Cacti and Succulents
Mini Show: Show & Tell

March 17, 2024

Presenter: Fred Dotort
Topic: Grit Dwellers, Quartz Fields
Mioni Show: TBA

April 12, 13, 14, 2024

Spring Show and Sale

May 19, 2024

Presenter: Michiel Pillet
Topic: Cactus Conservation
Mioni Show: TBA

Help Make the Spring Show and Sale a Bigger Success

The Spring Show and Sale is only a few months away. It is time to start working on making it a success. Many of you have expressed a willingness to help with ideas for location, activities, tie-ins with other groups, lots of ideas. Now is the time to gather those ideas and see what we can add to our Spring Sale.

I have two options to get this started. One is to collect ideas by email and then send the collected ideas to the group. The other option is to schedule a video call for any member to join. I think the first option - collecting information by email and then having a video meeting to decide what we can use this time and what we can do in the future is the way to go.

So -----

Please email me this month with any ideas you have for the show and sale or if you want to be involved with making decisions. I will collect them and send out an email to anyone who wants to be involved. Then we can schedule a video meeting to make some decisions.

Nancy Thomsen
Show and Sale coordinator

nembuno@gmail.com

Future MBACSS Sales Save the Dates

Here are the dates of the upcoming sales for 2023 and 2024

Spring 2024 - Apr 12, 13, 14

Fall 2024 - Aug 30, 31 Sep 1



LEADERSHIP

Officers and Chairpersons for 2022 - 2023

Officers

President - Mary Cross
Vice President - Nancy Thomsen
Secretary - Meryl Abramson
Treasurer - Lou Falek
Membership - Lyn MacDonald
Affiliate Representative - Jorge Quiñónez
Directors at Large
 David Kurtz
 Peter Shaw
 Daisy Szeto
Immediate Past President - Tom Karwin
Founding Member - Naomi Bloss

Chairpersons

Interim Librarian - David Kurtz
Mini-Show - Stan Verkler
Newsletter Editor - Nancy Thomsen
Photography - Paul Albert
Programs - Jorge Quiñónez
Raffles - Bill Ashen
Sale Floor Manager - Peter Beiersdorfer
Show Managers - Naomi Bloss
Assistant Floor Manager - Janet Sparks
Sunshine Committee - Cheryl Albert
Webmaster - Anita Crawley
Greeter - Dave Novarina

Our next membership meeting will be:

Sunday, February 18, 2024
Corralitos Grange
165 Little Corral Way, Corralitos.

There is plenty of parking near the hall and the building is ADA accessible.

Doors open at 11:00am

Bring your own lunch starts at 12:00pm

Meeting starts at 12:30pm