

January 2025



Monterey Bay Area
Cactus & Succulent
Society

On The Dry Side

Greeting fellow succulent lovers and MBACSS members,

I hope that 2025 has been treating you well so far!!! I always feel hopeful at the beginning of a new year and this one is no exception. I anticipate good stuff happening, personally as well as with our Society. The Board is anticipating changes and planning for our two sales; efforts are being made to attract and retain new members, the list of monthly speakers and activities is looking very interesting, and our monthly newsletter continues to grow and be more interesting every month. We have even begun to plan for 2026! If that's not "hopeful," I don't know what is. For me personally, I am very hopeful because of my new living situation which partly involves my continuing to be a part of our Society. By necessity, my collection had to shrink by more than half when I moved. But the plants I was able to keep are very happy in their new environment. I anticipate learning a lot more about succulents and cactus this year at our monthly meetings.

All members are welcome at our Board meetings which take place the first Sunday of every month, on zoom from 7:00 to about 8:30pm. Please contact me for the zoom info and make a plan to attend as a way to learn more about how we function and to bring your ideas to us to incorporate into our plans. Do you think we should have pot luck lunches again? If so, we need two or three people to take charge. (An aside...if you don't participate, you don't have the right to complain about things that happen that you don't like!!)

As always, I look forward to seeing you at our membership meeting on the 3rd Sunday of the month (January 19) at the Corralitos Grange Hall, 165 Little Corral Way, Corralitos. Come early to help set up the tables and chairs at 11:30. During our "Bring Your Own Lunch" lunch from 12–12:30 we will have a short meeting to let you know what is happening, then from 12:30 to about 1:00 we will again have Show and Tell with the members showing us a favorite or interesting plant and telling us about it followed by our speaker, Brian Kimble (see his bio on a later page) who will talk to us about the hazards of growing Hechtias (i.e. "Bloody Fingers"). As usual we will have our plant raffle. Good Stuff! See you then.

Mary Louise Cross, President

Photos By
Paolo Albert



APPROVED MINUTES

December 2, 2024

Call to Order: Mary Cross.

Members present: Mary Cross, Naomi Bloss, Nancy Thomsen, Diane Salewski, David Kurtz, Jorge Quiñonez, Lou Falek, Lyn MacDonald, Peter Beiersdorfer, Meryl Abramson.

Minutes: Mary/Meryl. November minutes accepted as corrected.

Treasurer's Report: Lou. Accepted as written. Lou was able to secure (for two years) the mbacss.org web name, and this now redirects to mbsucculent.org.

Chairpersons' Reports:

Membership: Lyn. Seventy-three people have renewed so far. Lyn noted that we kept more of our 2023 members than we did of our 2022 members;

Sunshine Committee: No updates.

Programs: Jorge. November speaker was well received, however, only 22 people attended the meeting. Discussion about speakers presenting basic/beginner info vs. a higher level of talk. Are we alienating the hobbyist? In the past, we have had a full meeting with just Q&A. We do two travelogues a year. Should we provide more 'hands on' events, which draw a different membership group? An email note pre-meeting was not sent beforehand. Some suggestions although Lyn's suggestion box at the Sale received no input.

December general meeting will be the End-of-Year party. Jorge has already scheduled a number of speakers for our 2025 programs. These include talks about pineapple relatives, starting plants from seeds, mangaves, and a speaker from Lotusland. Thank you, Jorge!!

Old Business: All. Mary found more stuff from the Library when she moved. David reiterated that the cabinet remains over-full. Board voted to investigate outside storage space costs and availability.

The JPM Calendar gives dates for all California shows for the year

The Board approves and hopes this will add value for all. We will consider adding a short beginner talk before the main speaker at our General Meetings.

New Business: All. End-of-Year Party. 51 people have signed up so far.

There will be three auctions: a live auction, a silent auction, and a plant exchange, like last year. For the plant exchange, please bring **ONE** 4" healthy plant or larger. Participants will each receive one ticket for the drawing

Respectfully submitted by Meryl Abramson

MEMBERSHIP

It's Time For Dues!

It's that time again. Your 2025 Membership dues are due. A single membership is \$25.00 and a family membership is \$30.00. We have made it easy. You can bring a check or cash to the meeting this Sunday or go to the website and pay online. The online method makes our Membership Chair's job easier.

If you want to pay at the meeting this Sunday, **please know your membership status before you arrive.** If you have paid your 2025 dues you received a thank you email from our Membership Chair. If you do not know your 2025 membership status, contact Lyn by email.

mbacss.membership@gmail.com

Here is a Dues Form ----->

You can fill it out before coming to a meeting along with your check or cash and put it in the dues jar.

MONTEREY BAY AREA

CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

PLEASE PRINT

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

Phone:(_____) _____

E-mail: _____

Renewing ____ New Member ____

(required to receive newsletter)

Payment by: Check__ Cash__ CC__

Type of Membership:

Single \$25 per year _____

Couple \$30 per year _____

You can renew membership or join via the web, or by mailing a check to:

Lou Falek, MBACSS Treasurer
76 Nunes Road
Watsonville, CA 95076

To pay online:

<http://mbsucculent.org/membership/>

New Members may bring dues to the first meeting they attend and give them to the Membership Chair

CHECKS PAYABLE TO: MBACSS

JANUARY MEETING

Sunday January 19, 2025

Hechtia

By Brian Kemble

The Bromeliad Family is a large group of plants from the Americas with great importance in horticulture. One family member, the pineapple, is also important as a crop in tropical countries. It is presumed that the family originated in South America, because this is where the family is most diverse, but Central America and North America have some wonderful examples as well, including the genus *Hechtia*. Most of the *Hechtia* species come from Mexico, though they do cross the border into the southwestern U.S., as well as into Guatemala in a southward direction. Unlike many bromeliads, the species in *Hechtia* have separate male and female plants, a difference that shows up only when they flower. This talk will feature many *Hechtia* species in habitat, as well as ones in cultivation.

Brian Kemble is the Curator at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, CA, as well as the VP of the San Francisco Succulent & Cactus Society and the VP of the Institute for Aloe Studies. He has been growing and studying succulents since the 1970's, and has written many articles for the *Cactus & Succulent Journal*, as well as other publications. His photos appear in numerous books on succulents, including the *Timber Press Guide to Succulent Plants of the World*.



CLUB NEWS

Upcoming meetings:

Jan 19, 2025

Presenter: Brian Kimble
Topic: Hechtias
Mini Show: Show and Tell

Feb 16, 2025

Presenter: Ernesto Sandoval
Topic: Propagation
Mini Show: Show and Tell

Mar 16, 2025

Presenter: Gerhard Bock
Topic: Mangroves
Mini Show: Show and Tell

April 19 & 20, 2025 MBACSS Spring Show & Sale

Future MBACSS Sales Save the Dates

Here are the dates of the
upcoming sales for 2025

Spring 2025 - Apr 19, 20
Fall 2025 - Sept 31, 14

THOSE PESKY MEALY BUGS

BY CHUCK STAPLES

From Mid-Iowa C&S Society Newsletter, January 1991

*“Do not wait for mealy bugs to find your plants.
Take PREVENTIVE measures on a regular basis.”**

*That is a quote from Isabelle McDermid in her article “Tips on Growing Stapeliads” in the Amateurs Digest (Col.2, No.3) the Canadian Cactus and Succulent Publication by Marina Welham.

Isabelle sprays her Stapeliads at least once a month with a mixture of equal parts rubbing alcohol and sudsy ammonia. She says it doesn't hurt the plants and it discourages the mealybugs. She also drenches the soil in the pots with a good “systemic” dissolved in water. She finds this prevents root mealybugs from taking up residence in the potting soil. I think this is good advice for all our cacti and succulents. Be careful with the systemic. Don't get the solution on your skin.

(I found this article in some of the old materials from our MBACSS library and thought it would be good for our members too. Recently, I have seen several articles about this same problem, and each has a little different formula to solve the problem, but basically the same idea: some combination of alcohol and dish soap in water. This one adds another ingredient. Mary Cross)

Reading this article and others in the same issue on mealy bugs reminded me of how I try to cope with this universal problem. I (Chuck Staples) thought I'd share some of my thoughts with you on the subject.

Here is the rubbing alcohol mix I prepare in a one-gallon jug (I've never tried sudsy ammonia):

- 4 pints of 70% (by volume) isopropyl Rubbing Alcohol.**
- Ivory dishwashing liquid. I'm not very exact on the amount – around 8 to 12 drops or so.**
- Tabasco Pepper Sauce. Same drops as above**
- Water from the faucet. Fill the rest of the jug with water.**

The ivory dishwashing liquid is the sticking agent that makes the mix stick to the little mealy bodies – which hopefully makes them sicker than the devil. I read somewhere many years ago that the Tabasco sauce helps to discourage spider mites. I've used this mix for years and I've never seen any bad effect on any of my plants. Although I don't have any scientific data on the effect of this mix on mealybugs and spider mites, I believe I've kept the population down some by my constant use of it. I have a number of squirt bottles full of the it strategically placed near my plants for immediate use when I need it.

Chuck Staples

edited by Mary Cross – I invite any of our readers to share other solutions to this universal problem with Mealy bugs.

GROWING GUIDE

A few months ago I was given a printout off a website of a long gone nursery. I found it helpful and learned some things I didn't know. So I am going to include a section of this guide in each newsletter this year. Let me know if you find it helpful or interesting. Some of the references are outdated and some of the information has been updated since this was written. Each month will discuss one topic. This month is about using botanical names. Coming to the meetings and listening to the speakers is a great way to get started on the path to names. Read this and give it a try.

--- Nancy Thomsen, Editor.

Speak The Language

For many, entering the world of succulent plants and the people who collect and trade in them means confronting the Latin botanical nomenclature used to name and describe this natural world. Don't be put off by this! Learning the botanical names of your plants and how to pronounce them is essential to cultivating and building your collection. Abandon the use of common names such as "snake plant" or "pencil cactus" in favor of *Sansevieria* and *Euphorbia*. Common names are not unique and will only lead to confusion.

All you really have to know is that each plant is a single species or a hybrid of two or more species, and like species are organized into a larger single group called a genus such as *Pachypodium*. In turn, groups of similar genera make up the plant families such as *Apocynaceae* which includes the genera *Pachypodium* and *Adenium*. Genus and species in that order are used exclusively when referring to any plant. So instead of "Madagascar Palm" we use *Pachypodium lamerei* or *Adenium obesum* in place of "Desert Rose".

Don't be intimidated or embarrassed when attempting to pronounce these strange names. Everyone makes mistakes but with a little experience it becomes second nature. To get started you could even watch *The Victory Garden* on PBS where they consistently use genus and species when discussing plants of all kinds.

LEADERSHIP

Officers and Chairpersons for 2024 - 2025

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 - Meryl Abramson
Sale Floor Manager - Peter Beiersdorfer
Show Managers - Naomi Bloss
Assistant Floor Manager - Janet Sparks
Sunshine Committee - Cheryl Albert
Webmaster - Diane Salewski
Greeter - Dave Novarina

See our website for more information

mbsucculent.org

Our next membership meeting will be:

Sunday, January 19, 2025
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