

February 2025



Monterey Bay Area  
Cactus & Succulent  
Society

# On The Dry Side

Greeting fellow succulent lovers and MBACSS members,

As I'm writing this the sun is very brightly shining in my windows and on my plants on my deck. But last week we got some nice (where I live) and some not so nice (in the mountains) rain and this week we will get some more. We still need more rain to meet our annual goals but I have to admit I prefer sunny!

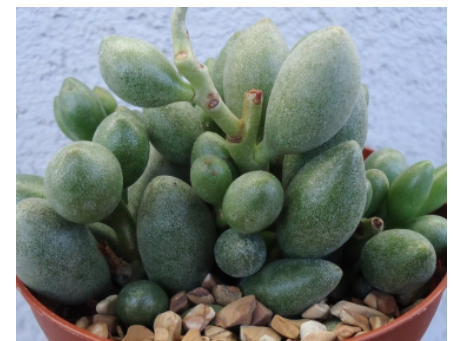
When I moved, I had to give away a whole bunch of my plants. If you happened to get any of them, I hope they are happy in their new home with you. My now much smaller collection is thriving in our new location. I'm so very grateful. There are winter growers flowering or getting ready to, new growth on some that surprised me and a couple that are blooming that I have never seen bloom before! Nice surprises almost every time I go out to check on them or take care of them in some way. One thing I decided to do this year is do more research on the plants I have so I can better take care of them. I have a variety of books, the internet is a wonderful resource but talking with others at meetings and going to meetings to hear the speakers helps me a lot also. Learning new things is fun and a good part of why I like being a member of our Society.

The January membership meeting was attended by a very enthusiastic group of 27 people. We had several new people and first-time attendees which always adds a good vibe to the meetings. Our presenter was Brian Kimble who gave a very interesting presentation on Hechtias, both growing them and seeing them in habitat. He showed us lots of varieties of this spiny plant that I admit I knew nothing about before. I'm not in favor of plants with spines but I love learning new things and have come to appreciate the outstanding flowers spiny succulents and cactus have.

The Board is already beginning to plan for our Spring Sale on Easter Weekend. One new idea that came out at the last meeting was to have a display of Easter themed succulents. I was delighted to see examples of little plants that look like easter bunny ears and eggs, etc. As always, each of you is invited to and welcome to attend our Board meetings on zoom. Let me know if you want to attend to see what we do and how we do it and I'll give you the zoom ID.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing you at our next in-person meeting at the Corralitos Grange Hall on Sunday, February 16 when our speaker will be Ernesto Sandoval. Bring your own lunch, bring a plant for show and tell, bring money to buy raffle tickets for the plant raffle/drawing, come to share with other enthusiasts and learners.

Gratefully,  
Mary Louise Cross, President



# APPROVED MINUTES

**January 5, 2025**

**Call to Order: Nancy.**

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

**Minutes: Nancy/Meryl.** December minutes accepted as written.

**Treasurer's Report: Lou.** Accepted as presented. Lou noted that this year, due to generous donations and improvement in sales, the Club's overall financial health has improved. The Board thanked Lou for providing financial information and transparency. Insurance has been purchased for the year.

**Chairpersons' Reports:**

**Membership: Lyn.** About 80 people are members in good standing

**Sunshine Committee:** No updates.

**Programs: Jorge.** January speaker will be Brian Kemble on bromeliads, and Jorge will supply the raffle plants. If you would like to supply a month or two of raffle plants, please contact Meryl. Jorge has largely scheduled speakers for 2025.

Our goal is to educate. Show & Tell will continue; even new members participate. There is little to no feedback from members as to what programming they'd like to see

**Old Business: All.** End-of-year party seemed to be enjoyed by all; over 60 people rsvp'd. Kudos to Lyn for cooking and providing the food, and thanks to Lyn and Lou for the donation. Decorations were very nice. The auctions seemed better organized, and the spreadsheets helped the clerks and Treasurer and sped up payments at the end. The plant exchange went smoothly; thank you to Daisy and Gloria for their suggestion to make the exchange fairer.

Storage options (for library books, decorations, etc.) will be discussed next month.

**New Business: All.**

Dates for 2026 shows were discussed. For the spring show, April 17-18-19 is preferred with 24-25-26 as a back-up if those dates are not available. Fall Show: September 18-19-20 is preferred, with 25-26-27 as a back-up.

**Reminder dates for 2025 shows: Spring Show & Sale: April 18 (set-up only, no sales)-19-20; Fall Show & Sale: Sept. 12 (set-up only)-13-14.**

Nancy will be preparing to step away as Show Manager as she takes over the Presidency in 2026. Please contact Nancy if you'd like to become more involved at the shows.

**Adjournment: Mary.**

**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](mailto: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**

# FEBRUARY MEETING

Sunday February 16, 2025

## Succulents from Seed with Ernesto Sandoval: Tricks and Techniques

Ernesto, when he was still at the UC Davis Botanical Conservatory, experimented with various techniques for propagating succulents from seed. Now as part of his graduate work he's testing out more techniques. Ernesto wants to share these techniques, tips, and tricks for better seed germination. If you haven't tried growing from seed or if you are looking for ways to increase your success rate perhaps, Ernesto thinks you'll appreciate this visual tour of seed propagation of plants such as Welwitschia, Aloes, Cacti, Dorstenia, Othonna, Mesembs and more.



# CLUB NEWS

## Upcoming meetings:

### 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

### May 18, 2025

Presenter: Troy Stephens  
Topic: A Botanical Tour of Oaxaca  
Mini Show: Show and Tell

## Future MBACSS Sales Save the Dates

Here are the dates of the  
upcoming sales for 2025

**Spring 2025 - Apr 19, 20**  
**Fall 2025 - Sept 13, 14**

## CULTURE OF LITHOPS

By David C. Naylor, Cacti & Other Succulents,  
"The Amateurs' Digest" Vol. 2, No. 6, March, 1991

The successful culture of Lithops plants is accomplished by watching the plants for signs that indicate their requirements.

Lithops plants require high light levels, lots of sun or high artificial light intensities. They grow well in any well draining soil mixture. In general, they are watered in Spring and Fall with an occasional misting or light bottom watering in the Summer. The old saying "if in doubt – don't water" applies to the care of Lithops. They grow best in plastic pots with a soil depth of at least 10cm (4 in.).

Lithops normally have one pair of leaves making up a body but may have many bodies (stems) with age. Observe a plant and see how many leaf-pairs make up each body. If there is more than one pair of leaves to a body, the plant should be kept dry until the oldest (outside) leaves dry up.

When a plant has only one leaf-pair to each body and it is a growing time of the year (September – June), water normally (give a good soaking when dry and then wait until dry again before repeating).

In July or August, and at other times if exceptionally hot, the plant will go dormant (leaf surface will be dull in appearance) and will not use up the soil moisture. Therefore, to prevent rot, do not water unless the plant is slightly wrinkled which indicates the need for a light bottom watering or misting. Do not ignore the plants at this time of the year especially if they are in clay pots and it is extremely hot.

They normally flower in the Fall, but some species may start flower in July, continuing through as late as February, followed by growth of a new pair of leaves or sometimes two pairs of leaves (two new bodies) on each stem between the existing leaves. When a new growth appears look to see if the growth is a flower bud or leaves. A flower bud has a pointed top but the new leaves will be flat with the slit between the leaves being visible and crosswise to the old leaves. If it is a flower bud, keep watering normally as the bud develops, tapering off when blooming commences.

Quit watering completely when the flowers wither or a new body is visible between the old leaves. Do not water again until the old leaves are completely dried up. Watering may then be resumed until the mid-Summer dormant period.

NOTES: Lithops, like Cereus, is both the singular and plural name of the genus. There for you may have "one Lithops: but not "one Lithop".

Because different species of Lithops may have slightly different watering schedules, it is not recommended to mix different species in one container.

Edited by Mary Cross

# GROWING GUIDE

## Light and Your Strategy

By far the single most important element for growing quality plants is available light. Succulents need serious natural light. This means a full southern exposure with nothing between your plants and the sun except possibly the window glass or greenhouse glazing. A full southern exposure is one which receives all available light for most of the day. Avoid locations which are blocked by trees or buildings.

In a perfect world, your plants would be growing in a blazing southern exposure and receiving 360° light. This would of course mean a perfectly situated greenhouse or an outside location in a frost free climate. Such facilities are impossible for many of us but this does not mean that you still can't grow first rate quality plants. This is where your strategy is required.

Your strategy should be to give your plants the light they need when they need it. The keyword here is when. Most succulents will enter an annual dormancy period and will tolerate less than ideal light during this part of their life cycle.

If you are growing indoors, the preferred strategy is to move your plants outside during the summer months for optimum light during their growth period then winter them over in southern windows when they are dormant.

If you are restricted to indoor conditions year round, you must compromise. Regardless of how good your windows are, you will still be providing light from only one direction and there will be a few plants that will not tolerate less than ideal light. You will have to restrict your collection to those genera which will grow well in your conditions or simply move your plants to better light.

If you are growing in a greenhouse or outside in frost free conditions, sufficient light is not your problem. In many parts of the southern and southwestern U.S. your problem can be too much light and some sun filtering material is in order especially for smaller plants in small containers.

Artificial light will keep most but not all succulent plants alive but that's about it. After more than a month or two under fluorescent tubes for example, plants take on a very soft weak look and quickly lose their appeal. Artificial light is best used as a supplement to your winter source if you bring your plants indoors during the winter months.

These strategies apply to summer growing (winter dormant) succulents. As you will discover, many genera are winter growing (summer dormant) which definitely makes providing sufficient light even more challenging. However it is possible!

How can you tell if your plants are receiving proper light? Their general appearance will be compact with the distance between the leaves very short. Leaves will also be small not big and floppy. Rosettes of leafy succulents such as Echeveria will be tight while leaves and bodies of extremely succulent types such as lithops will be compact and colorful, not bloated and soft looking.

Some of the most light sensitive succulents are the Crassulaceae (echeveria, crassula, graptopetalum, kalanchoe, sedum, etc.), Mesembryanthemaceae (lithops, conophytum, etc.) and Apocynaceae (pachypodium, adenium) while some of the least light sensitive are the Liliaceae (aloes, haworthias), many euphorbias, sansevierias, and stapeliads.

There are many factors to consider if you want to grow first rate, truly beautiful plants but by far, providing sufficient light is the most important. There is hardly anything more unattractive or that reflects poor cultivation technique than an etiolated or stretched out succulent. Etiolation is not reversible, unless the subject can be started again from a cutting, so once this occurs, the plant is ruined. Study your conditions and adopt a strategy for providing proper light. There is no substitute.

# 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](http://mbsucculent.org)

Our next membership meeting will be:

**Sunday, February 16, 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