



ON THE DRY SIDE

AUGUST 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We had a mix-up on our last meeting and our speaker did not make it, but it sounds like everyone made the best of it and had time to chat. This month, we have a presentation on photography by our own Jaan Lepson. This will be another interesting presentation. I want to thank Jorge Quiñónez for all the interesting and varied presentations he finds for us. We have more interesting and educational programs coming up this year, we will learn about Orchids and propagation and maybe play some BINGO. Later in the newsletter you can find the schedule of speakers and mini show categories for the rest of the year.

At the beginning of the year, I made a BINGO card with stuff I want to do this year – Day trips, baseball and basketball games, museum, take a class, read a book, etc. I marked 2 of these quickly and then nothing. Last Sunday, I pulled it out and decided to check off 2 items. We went to Roaring Camp to ride the train and drove through the redwoods. Then this Sunday, we drove to Cambria for lunch and exploring. These day trips help my mood and the weather has been so nice – that helps too. I have cactus and succulent items on my list – UCSC arboretum, Ruth Bancroft, have a show plant. These trips will wait until the fall when the traffic is somewhat lighter. I made goals when I was younger and then stopped. I like setting goals and finding out I accomplished some of them without even realizing it.

Kathy Wittpenn has been sending photos of her plants that I have included in the last newsletter and this one. If you have something happening in your garden or greenhouse, take some photos and send them in so you can be in print! We also want to put club photos on social media to promote our club. You can send them to me and I will get them posted.

I hope to see you at the meeting this Sunday.

Nancy Thomsen
President/Editor

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MEETING MINUTES

Call to Order: Nancy Thomsen

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

Minutes of 6/7/2026: Approved.

Two (newer) members have volunteered as our Librarians.

Treasurer's report: Lou. Accepted as presented. We made money on the June raffle, and received our money back from Portuguese Hall (Fall Show & Sale, cancelled).

Membership Report: Lyn. A long-time member has returned after illness, joining the Club with her daughter in a family membership.

Next General Meeting (July): Jorge. Szymon Szary will present about cacti in Chile. The Mini-Show plants will be Echeveria.

Jon now has the key to the Grange gate and building, and the library.

August: Jaan Lepson; Sept.: an orchid talk from a member of the Carmel Orchid Society; Oct.: succulent bingo/ice cream social; November: Ernesto Sandoval-- workshop on growing succulents from seed.

No CSSA update.

New Business: All. A meeting was held earlier in the week to discuss the cancellation of the Fall Show with the vendor contact.

Old Business: All. Board discussed various granges as alternatives for monthly meetings; discussion tabled due to too many potential changes at the Club. Also, we may need to reconsider storage as Club items are being held in so many homes.

Adjournment: Nancy.

Respectfully submitted by Meryl Abramson

AUGUST SPEAKER

PHOTOGRAPHY FOR FUN AND (SEMI-)FAME

BY JAAN LEPSON

Jaan is not a professional photographer - but he likes to take pictures! And he has even been paid for some of them. Jaan's interest in cactus and succulent photography began by documenting his and Peter's growing collection at home, and expanded with trips to the U.S. Southwest, South America, the Canary Islands, and southern Africa. After he and Peter were briefly stranded at the Alte Kalköfen Lodge in Namibia at the start of Covid, they began to visit Namibia several times each year, which has given Jaan a lot of opportunity to experiment with various equipment and styles. In his presentation, Jaan will discuss different techniques in the field and in the greenhouse, including time lapse and focus stacking, and will show lots of pretty pictures (and maybe a few bloopers as well!) Jaan and Peter will bring plants for sale



ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Jaan Lepson grew up in Hawai'i, where he developed a love for nature, specifically . . . rain forests. After receiving a B.A. from Princeton University, Jaan returned to pursue his Ph.D. at the University of Hawai'i, living for 5 years in an isolated tent 6200' up the side of Mauna Kea, where he studied endangered native forest birds. After his first year of camping in the rain forest, he decided to take a vacation, and so he went camping in the desert, visiting Death Valley with Peter. And the rest is history!

BEGINNER'S GUIDE

FOULING THE AIR WITH POISONS

By Roger Brown (from his article "Growing Cacti and Succulents for the Beginner, Part 7" from CSSA NEWSLETTER, January-February 1996 and part of his article "Insecticides" from CSSA NEWSLETTER May-June 1994)

It seems foolish, and perhaps even wicked for me to imply that you can maintain a healthy well-grown collection of cactus and succulents without the use of chemical poisons. Caregivers of plants must on occasion use sprays as part of a preventive maintenance or treatment program. Chemicals used for sprays are usually classified as poisons, and present health risks for the three P's (people – plants – and pets) which may have their health permanently damaged if you are careless with your responsibilities. Taking the time to do the job properly will limit the danger to you and other living things. There are no tradeoffs. Every molecule of poisons in your gizzard is another nail in your coffin!

Pesticides should strike fear in the hearts of the wise. When spraying your plants you must cover all your exposed skin possible with hat, mask, long sleeves, and full-length trousers. At the very least you should wear rubber gloves when handling fungicides and insecticides, and a surgical mask when spraying or dusting. They can be purchased at any pharmacy. Please also remember that you could be fouling the environment in which the three P's live. So just because you have protection, don't go out and drench all your plants with poison like a chemist gone mad. Read the instructions carefully and use the right amount in the right place at the right time.

Different insect pests require different poisons so you can see it is very important for you to identify the pest you are dealing with. Yellow sticky cards strategically placed through your collection will effectively monitor for the presence of flying insects. Generally speaking, insecticides that will kill eight-legged insects such as mites (tiny spiders with eight legs), will not kill six legged insects, and vice versa. The label on the product you pick must contain two things. First it must list the name of the insect you want to control, and secondly it should say that it is safe for the plants you are going to use it on. Products designed for garden or orchard use are often not safe for indoor use.

The benefits of pesticides far outweigh their dangers when they are used safely and properly. The following are the TEN COMMANDMENTS to be followed by each wise plant caregiver.

1. Read the label – Be sure the chemical is in fact effective for the pest problem you are dealing with. Be sure you are diluting it properly and using it at proper intervals.
2. Timing – Apply sprays early in the morning, after sundown, or on cloudy days to reduce chances of phytotoxicity. Do not apply chemicals if the temperature is above 85 degrees.
3. Agitation – Periodically shake to agitate the spray bottle or tank during the spray process. Most products are in suspension that will constantly settle to the bottom of the tank. This thick slurry is bound to damage plants.
4. Do not mix products – Mixing several products together will often make them more damaging to host plants than if they were applied separately. Products that are mixed may produce a chemical reaction that will turn your plants into a pot full of mush.
5. Spray Carefully – Avoid drenching soil surface with foliar sprays because many are not intended for safe use around roots. This is particularly true for seedlings.
6. Moisture Stress – Be sure your plants are recently watered. Dry plants are more easily damaged by chemicals.
7. Fertilizer – Do not apply pesticides with fertilizer!
8. Damaged Product – Do not use a wettable powder if it fails to break up and suspend properly, and do not use an emulsifiable concentrate if it fails to form a milky suspension.
9. Mix small amounts and use immediately – Most products cannot be stored for any length of time after dilution, because they break down and become ineffective.
10. Ventilation – Always mix chemicals in a well-ventilated area.

Edited by Mary Cross

CLUB NEWS

NEW LIBRARIANS!

Our librarian, David Kurtz, had to resign due to becoming very busy. At the July meeting not one, but two members stepped up and volunteered to be our librarians. Please welcome **Andrea Michaels** and **Lynn Vieyra**. The club has an extensive library at the grange. The librarians will bring out books on the subject of the speaker and mini show. We have a list of books on the website. Contact either librarian to check out a book. <https://mbsucculent.org/library/>

MINI SHOW CATEGORIES FOR THE REST OF 2026

Aug - Lithops
Sept – Gasteria
Oct – Mammalaria
Nov – Aloe

All will be Show and Tell.
Bring a plant in the category and tell the group about it. If you don't know what you have, you can use your phone and the AI assistant to figure it out.

More from Kathy
Wittpenn's garden
Yucca fluorescent before
the deer find it



UPCOMING MEETINGS:

August 16, 2026

Speaker: Jaan Lepson

Topic: Photography

Mini Show: Lithops

September 20, 2026

Speaker: Chris Thomas

Topic: Orchids

Mini Show: Gasteria

Leadership

2026 OFFICERS

President: Nancy Thomsen

Vice President: Jon Lubbe

Secretary: Meryl Abramson

Treasurer: Lou Falek

Membership: Lyn MacDonald

Affiliate Representative: Jorge Quiñónez

Directors at Large:

Dave Autore

Diane Salewski

Mary Edmund

Immediate Past President: Mary Cross

CHAIRPERSONS

Librarians: Andrea Michaels & Lynn Vieyra

Newsletter Editor: Nancy Thomsen

Newsletter Designer: Leia Dilley

Photography: Paul Albert & Dave Autore

Programs: Jorge Quiñónez

Raffles: Meryl Abramson

Sales Floor Manager: Peter Beiersdorfer

Assistant Floor Manager: Janet Sparks

Sunshine Committee: Paul Albert

Webmaster: Diane Salewski

Greeter: Dave Novarina

**See our website for
more information!**

mbsucculent.org

MEMBERSHIP MEETING INFORMATION

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

Doors open at 11:30am

Bring your own lunch starts at 12:00pm

Meeting starts at 12:30pm

Location:

Corralitos Grange

165 Little Corral Way, Corralitos.