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November 2009

ESPINAS Y FLORES

The Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society
Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America



Program: Irwin Lightstone
**“Up Close and Personal: Photographing the Plants
We Love to Grow”**

Succulent of the Month:
Andrew Wilson, “Stacked Stem Crassulas”

Cactus of the Month:
Don Hunt, “Thelocactus”

Saturday, November 14, 1:00pm
Casa Del Prado, Room 101
Balboa Park

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

25 October 2009

Happy fall and greetings from sunny Santee! The fog has burned off and it looks like another perfect day. I've already gone out and picked up the leaves that dared to fall on my other plants. I can't wait to retire so I can do this every morning.

Our picnic at the Wild Animal Park was a great success. Pam out did herself preparing lunch and desert. Joe Kraatz brought the beverages and made sure we had plenty. The Baja Garden volunteer team of Jürgen Menzel, Jim DeForest, Cathy Clark, Janet Svoboda and Peter Walkowiak got there early and made sure the gardens were ready. Julia Etter and Martin Kristen came up from Mexico and gave a walking tour of the Baja Garden discussing the Crassulas and Agaves. The attendance list was a mix of long term members and new members and hopefully you all got to know each other better.



A Walk in the Baja Garden
photo by Bev Grant

Our Holiday Party is coming up in December and that is another opportunity to get to know other members. The sign up sheet is in this newsletter. We are looking for donations of show quality plants for the Auction. The Auction proceeds offset the cost of the party. We will also have our raffle for volunteers only. Peter has selected 3 outstanding plants.

You'll notice a new feature in this newsletter, a Help Wanted section. If you are interested in volunteering and don't know what you can do, the Ads are the place to start. This organization has a won-

On the cover: *Thelocactus hexaedrophorus*
by Charles Antoine Lemaire 1800-1875

derful history of volunteerism. If it didn't we wouldn't be able to put on the size and quality of events we do. There is always more to do and to keep from burning out a handful of people we would like to spread the joy around.

Jim DeForest and Cathy Clark are currently writing a standard procedure for the check out process at our sales. We will be training in those procedures before the January meeting, exact time to be announced. We want to ensure a smooth operation at our large sales. Even if you have been a cashier, scanner or clerk in the past please plan on being to the January meeting a bit earlier than usual. We want this to be easy for the people working and quick for the customers.

The vendor agreements for the Winter Sale will be e-mailed out mid November. If you have not received notice in the past and are interested in selling please e-mail me so I can send you the forms.

Our speaker this month is Irwin Lightstone, an outstanding photographer. You can visit his web site at <http://www.radiantimagesphotography.net> for a preview of his pictures. This will be a very different program than we are used to and should be very interesting.

Don't forget the Faux Plant Brag Table this month. Put your creativity to the test and come up with an interesting faux plant to share!

We will need handled paper bags for sales at the November meeting. So those of you who have a stash of bags please bring them.

Enjoy your plants as you start preparing for winter (such as it is) and I will see you at the meeting.

Chris Miller

Snacks for the Break: Those with last names beginning with N through Z, please bring a snack to share at the break.

PROGRAM

Up Close and Personal: Photographing the Plants We Love to Grow

Irwin Lightstone

After 29 years practicing trial law, Irwin Lightstone closed his law firm to concentrate on his botanical and nature photography. Irwin is presently the president of the North Texas Cactus and Succulent Society, past president of the Texas Association of Cactus and Succulent Societies, and a vice president of the Fort Worth Cactus and Succulent Society. He led numerous photographic seminars throughout Texas including Houston, San Antonio, Austin, Fort Worth, Plano, Kerrville, McKinney, Waco and Dallas and was a featured speaker at last year's Gulf States Photographic Conference. Additionally, he led programs sponsored by the Dallas Museum of Art, the Dallas Arboretum and the International Photography Hall of Fame. His photography has won numerous awards and is often featured in the Cactus and Succulent Journal.

GREEN COMMITTEE

A Green Committee has been established to plan how the 2011 CSAA Convention that SDCSS is hosting can be the greenest convention possible. We are soliciting members, friends and anyone else who comes across this note for your good ideas. Helping Hands are also always welcome. If you have a great, green idea for our convention, please feel free to contact our Committee co-Chairs, **Art Cooley** and **Kathy Harris**, or any of the other members, **Pat Bryan**, **Cathy Clark**, **Steve Harris** or **Chris Tratnyek**. If you are reading *ESPINAS Y FLORES*, we know you have an interest in treading lightly on our environment. Thanks!

REMINDER FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

As 2009 draws to a close, I want to remind everyone that most memberships in the SDC&SS expire at the end of this calendar year. Please fill out a membership renewal form to accompany your payment. They will be available at the front door when you walk in to our next meeting in November. The forms will also be available at the December and January meetings. Note that this is the same form that is on the reverse of your newsletter mailing coversheet.

It would be so helpful if you renew prior to the close of the year, and I encourage you to do so. I also would like to remind everyone that you can pay for as many years membership in advance as you like. Then you don't have to think about this again for as many years as you pay forward. Remember to check above your name on your newsletter label to see your expiration date. It will always be printed there. However, if you have any questions at all about your membership, please feel free to contact me either by e-mail (collette.parr@cox.net) or by cell phone (619-384-8849).

Best wishes,

Collette Parr

SDC&SS Membership Chair

MEMBERSHIP CONTACT ROSTER

Joe Kraatz

It has been a few years since the membership contact roster was updated so I thought it was about time to complete a new one. This roster is for members only and has the phone number and/or the e-mail addresses. This is strictly on a voluntary basis. If you do not wish to be included that is fine. The November meeting will be the last chance to be included in the Membership Roster. I will pass around a sign up sheet for those who weren't at the previous two meetings. If you would like to be included and are unable to attend please phone me at 760-758-7042 or e-mail at plantnut@cox.net. The roster will be distributed at the Holiday dinner and subsequent meetings.

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH

Stacked Stem Crassulas

Andrew Wilson, March 2009

The Crassula family Crassulaceae is enormous, the third largest (behind Mesembs and Cacti) of plant families that are all-succulent. Inside that family the Crassula genus is pretty big, with over 150 species. Crassulas are distinguished from other family members like Dudleya, Sedum, Aeonium, Kalanchoe or Cotyledon by the number of stamens. For crassulas it is the same as the number of petals; for the others it is twice as many. As 150 species is a lot more than we can deal with in a few minutes let's narrow it down further and discuss a few crassulas that have 'stacked stems'. By that description, I mean the leaves are attached to the stem very close to each other.



Compare the image of bare-stemmed *C. sarcocaulis* (on the left) with the tight-stacked *C. plegmatoides* (on the right.)

With pairs of leaves closely stacked, the effective area for evaporation is reduced. These crassulas, in addition to being drought resistant, are also very attractive as pot plants or as gems for the rock

garden.

C. perfoliata occurs on mountain hillsides in the southern Karoo of South Africa. In a rock garden it is easy to grow. Its stems, up to two feet long, bend and droop down, hiding the center of the plant. *C. rupestris* has similar, but fleshier leaves that can completely hide the stem. Its flowers are pink and its leaves may have a red margin. The leaves of *C. deceptor* are so densely packed around the stems that, when the plant is young, it looks like a golf ball. In this form it resembles one of the quartz rocks among which it grows. This deceptive appearance gave rise to its name. When the previous two species were crossed the more upright variety 'Moonglow' resulted, a really delightful plant.

From the coastline area south of the Orange River comes the gangling *C. plegmatoides*. Almost totally reliant on nighttime moisture, this plant can be placed on a grit layer overlying soil and it will root. It will also grow more rapidly if it does get some water in summer but it is certainly the sort of plant that you can leave when you go away for a few weeks and not worry about. Placed at the edge of a ledge its stems will dangle downwards. Another crassula from that area and from further inland is *C. grisea*. Its leaves may be gray-green or may take on multiple hues, yellow, gray, blue and red.

The leaves of *C. barklyi* have an upper edge that is yellow, thus giving a striped appearance to the narrow stems. For this reason it is called the rattlesnake crassula. Unlike the better-known *C. columnaris* (which we do not embolden) it does not die after blooming but remains an excellent plant for many years. Another stacked stem crassula is *C. sericea*. The plant forms a small clump and will tolerate some shade. Some of its attractiveness comes from its downy leaves.

Cultivation of these plants is straightforward. They like a gritty soil or one composed of coarse DG. There is no need for organic material although you can use some. If potted they need little fertilizer and are slower growing but healthier without much. Planted out, they need none. If planted out, watering can be left to nighttime dews near the coast or given an evening misting further inland. In pots a weekly watering is recommended. They can be left outdoors in the rain provided the potting or rock-garden drainage is fast. All can be easily raised from cuttings. They provide a good year-round appearance, best appreciated from up-close.

CACTUS OF THE MONTH

Thelocactus

Don Hunt, October 2009

The central part of Mexico, from El Paso Texas in the north to Mexico City in the south, exists as a plateau between the rain shadow of the Sierra Madra Occidental to the west and the Sierra Madra Oriental to the east. A huge number of the cactus we find so fascinating come from this area. All the *Astrophytums*, *Peyote*, *Turbinicarpus*, *Coryphantha*, and lots of great *Mammillarias*. What a treasure hunt it would be to find these amazing plants in habitat.



Thelocactus macdowellii, photo by the editors

The subject of this article is the group *Thelocactus*. They are small to medium size and have showy flowers that are apical, funnel-shaped, white, yellow, magenta or rarely orange to red, with a scaled ovary and tube. Some will cluster, but they are generally solitary in nature.

The first *Thelocactus* to appear in Europe was *Thelocactus leucanthus*. This species was discovered by Karwinski near Zimapán, and sent to the München botanical garden around 1830. At that time it was ascribed to the genus *Echinocactus*, as was the case with most of the globular cacti.

The common characteristic though, are the ribs divided into tu-

bercles. This is the origin of the name, Greek this time, rather than Latin, *thelē*, meaning nipple. The tubercles can be difficult to distinguish, as they can be hidden by spines or not pronounced in some species. The spines are often needle-like, spread out and can be from 1.3 – 1.5 cm long. The central spines are mostly coarser, number up to six, stand vertically out from the plant and can be 2.5 – 7.5 cm long. Colors of all of the spines vary and include white, gray, golden-yellow and red-brown. According to Britton and Rose, *Thelocactus* are united



Thelocactus rinconensis, photo by the editors

primarily by fruit morphology which are small, globe-shaped and plain. They are dehiscent (opening spontaneously) through the large basal pore, green to brownish purple [to magenta], spherical to short cylindrical, 5 - 18 x 6 - 17 mm, not juicy, drying immediately after ripening, scaly,

spineless, hairless and with floral remnant persistent.

As usual the taxonomists have generated considerable controversy with the genus *Thelocactus*. As an example, The New Cactus Lexicon divides (admits sub-species) *T. bicolor*, but lumps (no sub-species) *T. rinconensis*. Well, consistency is over rated anyway. Currently, there are about 12 species.

These cactus are moderately slow growing, but are hardy and present no special difficulties. They may not bloom until the 5th year or so.

References: CactusMall.com, Wikipedia

SDCSS WANT ADS

If you are looking for a way to help here are some ideas:

<p>Official Photographer: For meetings, events and shows. Duties to include being the point of contact for other peoples pictures, supporting the web page and newsletter editor.</p>	<p>Ride Coordinator: Point of contact for those members who need a ride to meetings and those willing to give rides.</p>	<p>Trophy Sponsorship: We are in the process of updating trophies and are looking for donations to support the process.</p>
<p>Education Chair: For Summer Show: Put together a program for education during the summer show</p>	<p>Membership Committee Members: To support the membership chair in providing membership services.</p>	<p>Archivist: To develop and maintain electronic files of historic information.</p>
<p>Volunteers for WAP Gardens: For garden maintenance, new area development, plant identification and to work in the greenhouse</p>	<p>Holiday Party Decorating Committee Members: To help decorate for the Holiday Party.</p>	<p>Cashiers, Scanners and Boxers: For Winter show. Sign up this month. We will train at January meeting.</p>

Contact Chris if you would like to volunteer

Opinions expressed in articles and editorial comments are solely the opinions of the author or the editor and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the SDCSS, the Board of Directors or the organization as a whole. All material submitted to the *Espinas Y Flores* for possible publication may be edited in form and content. All material contained in the *Espinas Y Flores* may be reprinted by other non-profit organizations (unless permission is expressly denied in a note accompanying the article.) Please send one copy of the printed material to the editor. Reproduction in whole or part by any other organization without the express consent of the editor is prohibited.

ESPINAS Y FLORES GOING ELECTRONIC!

This month's issue of our newsletter will be available for viewing and downloading at the Club website, www.sdcss.net. Take a look! As a cost-savings measure, all members are being urged to accept an e-mailed version of the newsletter – the cost of color printing and mailing far outweigh the annual membership fee. As a trial, if you would like to receive the EyF through this e-mail link as well as by mail for the rest of the year, please send word to your newsletter editors at pdmaker@roadrunner.com. Beginning in 2010, you will have a choice as to how you wish to receive your copy of the newsletter, either electronically or by regular mail.

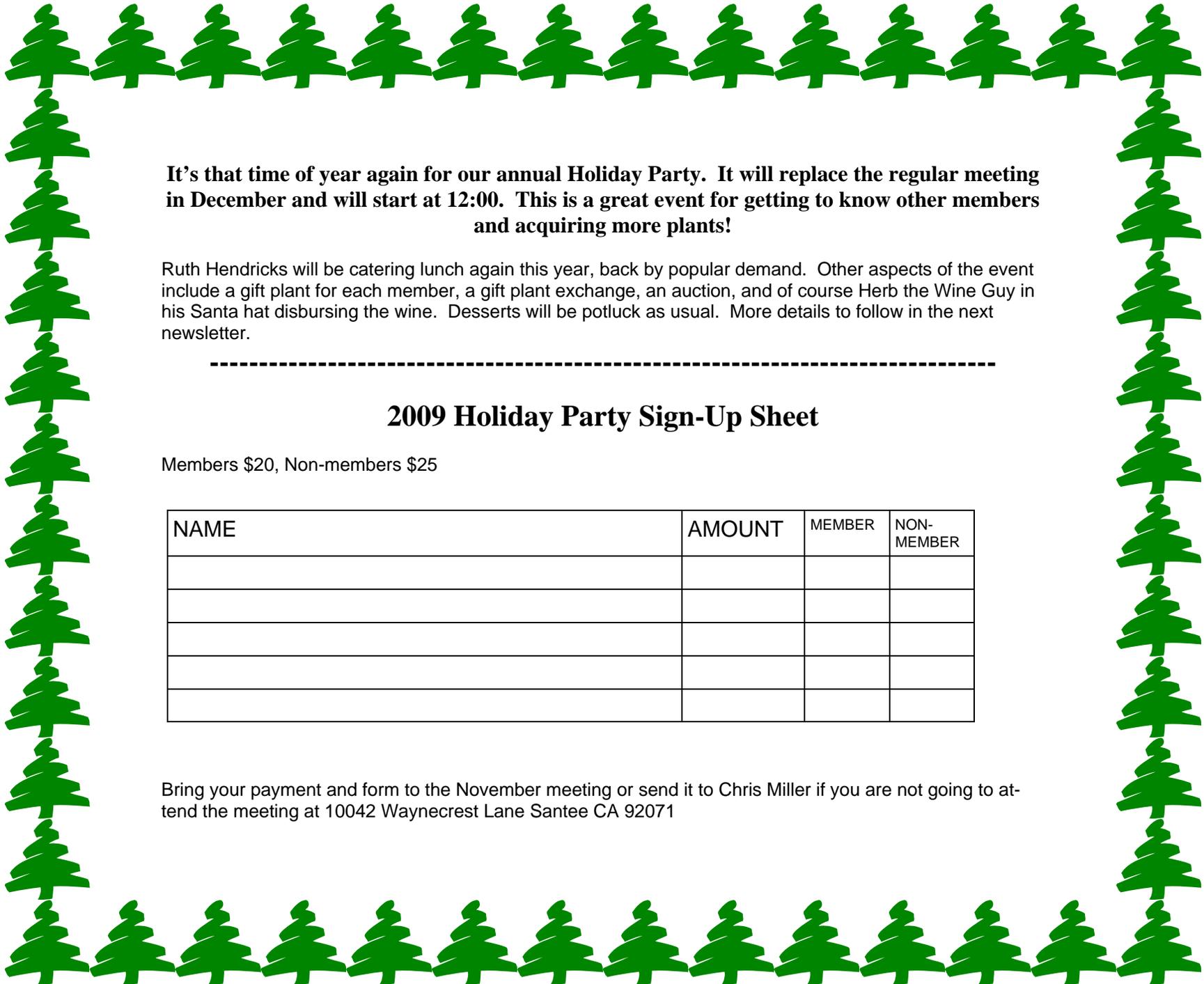
2009 UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 7-8: San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, CA. For information call Manny Rivera at 626-793-6917.

Dec 1-3: UCSD Crafts Center Holiday Sale. Excellent plant pots at good prices! For details, see www.crafts.ucsd.edu. For parking, see www.parking.ucsd.

Dec 4-6: Orange County CSS Winter Show and Sale, Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Road, Fullerton. For information call 714-870-4887.

The due date for submission of all material to be published in EyF will be the last Saturday of the month preceding the next monthly meeting. All submissions are to be made to the Editors. Please e-mail your articles to Paul & Carol Maker at PDMaker@roadrunner.com.



It's that time of year again for our annual Holiday Party. It will replace the regular meeting in December and will start at 12:00. This is a great event for getting to know other members and acquiring more plants!

Ruth Hendricks will be catering lunch again this year, back by popular demand. Other aspects of the event include a gift plant for each member, a gift plant exchange, an auction, and of course Herb the Wine Guy in his Santa hat disbursing the wine. Desserts will be potluck as usual. More details to follow in the next newsletter.



2009 Holiday Party Sign-Up Sheet

Members \$20, Non-members \$25

NAME	AMOUNT	MEMBER	NON-MEMBER

Bring your payment and form to the November meeting or send it to Chris Miller if you are not going to attend the meeting at 10042 Waynecrest Lane Santee CA 92071

**SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM**

Dues are \$15.00 per year per individual, and \$5.00 per **calendar** year for each additional household member. One newsletter, *Espinas y Flores*, is sent per household each month (bulk rate mail OR e-mail). First Class delivery is available for an *additional* \$5.00 to cover the cost of postage. Each member has all the rights and benefits of the organization.

Annual Dues – USA (bulk rate)* \$15.00 _____
(see bottom of this page for dues calculations for joining in any other month than January)

Check ONE for type of newsletter delivery: _____ **E-mail only**** **OR** _____ **USPS**
(If specifying e-mail delivery, you must fill in an e-mail address below)**

First Class delivery USA (optional) \$ 5.00 _____
Annual Dues – International \$30.00 _____
Additional Household Member(s) \$ 5.00 _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ **NEW** _____ **RENEWAL** _____

(Please fill in ALL blanks below!!!)

PRINT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP + 4:** _____

PHONE: _____ **FAX &/OR E-MAIL:** _____

ADDITIONAL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS:

Do you wish to receive e-mail notifications on club events and issues? Yes _____ No _____

Mail this form, along with a check or money order made payable to SDCSS in US funds, to:

SDCSS Membership Department
c/o Collette Parr
7924 Grape Street
La Mesa, CA 91941-6323
(collette.parr@cox.net)

***If joining in any other month than January, use the following to calculate your calendar year dues at \$1.25/month:**

February - \$13.75	July- \$7.50
March - \$12.50	August- \$6.25
April - \$11.25	September- \$5.00
May - \$10.00	October- \$3.7
	November- \$2.50
	December- \$1.25

(Rev. A, 2009-10-11)