



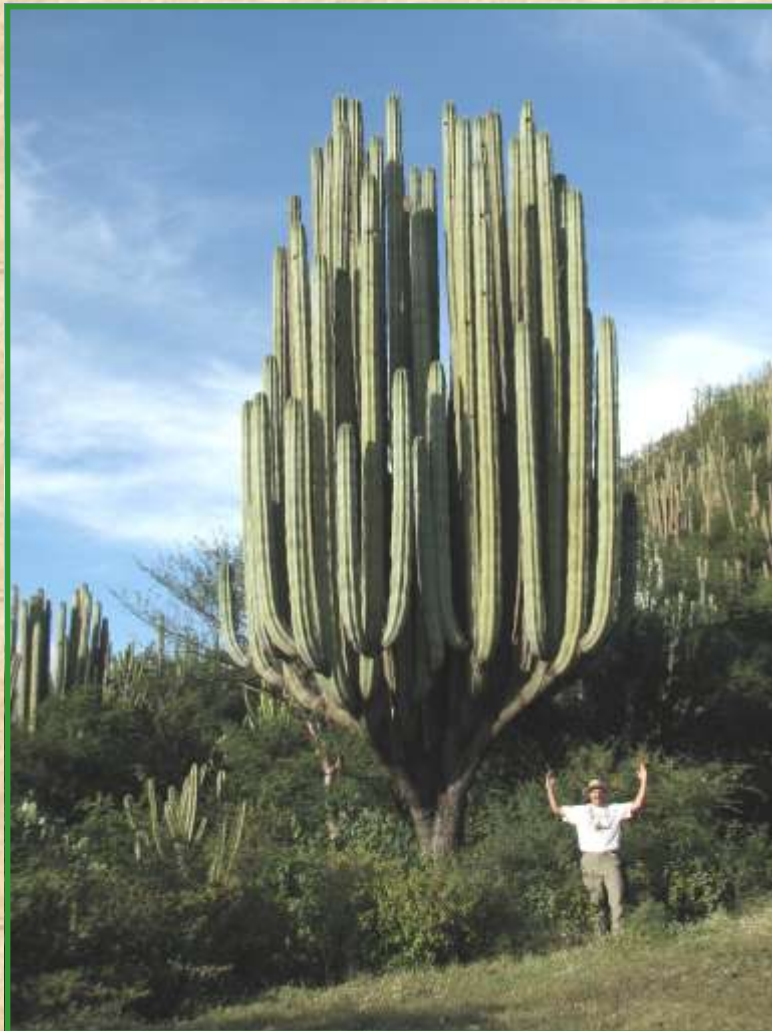
# *Espinas y Flores*

*The Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society*

Affiliated with the Cactus and Succulent Society of America

**Volume 46 Number 9**

**October 2011**



## **OCTOBER MEETING AGENDA**

**Program: John Trager**

“Oaxaca - Just Add Water”

**Plant of the Month: Kelly Griffin**

“Dudleya”

**Mini Workshop: BJ Miller**

“Digital Camera Basics”

**Coffee in the Garden:**

**Frank & Susan Oddo**

*EyF* **Feature Articles:**

**Tom Glavich** “Haworthia”

**Phil Bunch** “Growing Mesembs”

Saturday, October 8, 2011, 1pm to 4pm

Casa Del Prado, Room 101

Balboa Park

Plant Sales Begin at 10am

Workshop Begins at 11:30am

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

24 September 2011



Actual fall weather (for Oregon) in Santee. I'm waiting for the Santa Ana's to cook everything. I am trying not to be lulled into a false sense of the heat is over.

After **Erik Gronborg's** talk on Acacias in August I decided to pull one out of my yard that I planted two years ago. Those of you who are fans of trees will be happy to know **Ed Case** jackhammered it out this morning and it has a new home at his house. I am glad to see the mess gone and he has the room to plant it and let it become all that it can.

September has been a busy month for Cactus and Succulent people. The 3<sup>rd</sup> of September SDCSS was represented as participants of the Succulent Symposium at the Huntington by **Cathy Clark, Kathy and Steve Harris, Ken Blackford, Candy and Jerry Garner, Kelly and Denise Griffin, Michael and Warren Buckner, Bill and Jean O'Daniels,** and myself. The first topic of the day was "What is a succulent?" A topic that created a lot of discussion, some passionate, which was capped off by **Michael Buckner** getting up and sharing that he once asked **Phylliss Flechsig** what was her definition of a succulent. Her response was "Any plants that we collect and grow." That pretty much was that.

All the speakers during the day were wonderful and all of us were delighted by the quality and diversity of the talks. After dinner the speaker was **Steven Hammer**. What a wonderful end to a great day. He told us a bit about his background, shared some incredible pictures of plants and ended the evening by playing the piano. Turns out that music was his first career. An almost magical ending to a wonderful day. If you would like to go to the symposium free next year contact **Don Hunt** and volunteer to do a plant of the month or contact me for a workshop talk.

The following weekend a group from SDCSS and PCSS took a trip to Lotusland and spent a few hours in those incredible gardens. Go to our Facebook page to see **Collette Parr's** great pictures, a few of which appear here and on p. 7.. It was a long bus trip but I think everyone that went thought it was worth it.



The third weekend **Peter Walkowiak** was at the Home and Garden Show at the Fair grounds selling plants and promoting the organization.

Today, the forth weekend, many of us traveled to Solana Beach to view **Erik and Irina Gronborg's** wonderful garden and home. Many adjectives were used by the visitors, from wonderful to magical. Another trip well worth spending the time and gas to get there. Their combination of art and plants is incredible. Next month we will visit **Frank and Susan Oddo's** Birdsong Botanic Garden in the Elfin Forrest. See the article further along in the newsletter. We will again visit on the 4th Saturday of the month in October.

For those of you that are creative remember that November will feature a faux plant Brag Table. Now is the time to start those creative juices running, flowing, dribbling or whatever they do for you.

We have started receiving donations for the Anza Borrego fund. For the next two months we are going to do a fundraiser towards the Anza-Borrego fund. SDCSS will match any donation made by a member through the club to Anza-Borrego. Our goal is to donate a total of \$5000 between us. The money will go towards purchasing additional holdings for the park. This supports the conservation part of our charter. The cut off for donations is the November meeting.



Progress toward the Anza-Borrego Fund Goal

The Strategy Owners will be looking for support, help, and team members. Their first goal is to have three action items ready to work on by the next board meeting.

The Strategies we have selected to work towards our goal are as follows:

1. Develop a culture of involvement – Owner is **Steve Harris**.
2. Build and maintain an active membership - Owner is **Ken Blackford**.
3. Improve promotion of SDCSS – Owners are **Candy Garner & Kathy Harris**.
4. Develop and improve all aspects of Education – Team Leader is **Vanessa Nelson** (Team members include **Kelly Griffin, Don Hunt, Chris Miller**. Tours Chair TBD. Workshop Chair TBD).

Last but not least we will have a workshop prior to our meeting. **BJ Miller** will discuss the basics of using a digital camera. Be sure to bring your camera.

**Chris Miller**

## Program

“Oaxaca, Just Add Water”

John Trager



**John Trager** spoke to us last year about an expedition to Oaxaca with **John Pilbeam**, **Myron Kimnach** and others in search of *Mammillarias* and *echeverias*. This was at the end of the dry season in April. Six months later he returned, and went again with the CSSA fieldtrip a year later, both in November at the end of the rainy season. The differences between wet and dry seasons can be dramatic and will be the subject of **John's** presentation.

**John** is Curator of the Desert Collections at the Huntington Botanical Gardens in San Marino, CA where he has worked for nearly three decades. He manages the Huntington's plant distribution program, the International Succulent Introductions which appears in the March-April CSSA Journal each year and on the Huntington's website.

**John** has traveled widely in search of plants (and insects) including to China, Costa Rica, Israel, Mexico, South Africa, Thailand and Venezuela. He holds a bachelor's degree in Horticulture from Cal Poly Pomona and earlier studied Botany at UCSB and Santa Barbara City College. He lives in Sierra Madre with his wife and three children.

## Workshop

Digital Camera Basics

BJ Miller

Preceding the regular meeting, October 8th, 11:30 to 12:30, in Casa Del Prado Room 101

**BJ** will cover how a camera works, the relationship between aperture and time, and he'll talk about the settings wheel on the camera.

Bring your questions and your camera.



## Coffee in the Garden

With Susan and Frank Oddo

We would like to invite you to Coffee-in-the-Garden at the large and beautiful garden, **Birdsong**, of **Susan** and **Frank Oddo** in Elfin Forest. In 1978 **Frank** and **Susan** purchased three acres in Elfin Forest, CA. Frank began with “park plants” to create quick shade and greenery. When **Frank** retired he began to create his vision of a garden paradise . . . a place where we could stop and smell the flowers and reconnect with the earth. In transition since 1995, the garden has become a collection of artistically designed environments using a huge plant palette of trees for shade and protective canopy, shrubs to create backdrops and privacy, succulents, cactus, palms, yuccas, cycads, and Mediterranean plantings, winter and spring bulbs, roses, fruit trees, and a large vegetable garden. In each of these outdoor ‘rooms’ you will find tranquil sitting areas and a variety of whimsical art. To learn more about **Birdsong Botanic Garden** visit <http://www.birdsongbotanicgarden.com> .

When: Saturday, October 22, 2011, 12pm to 2pm

Where: **Susan and Frank Oddo's Garden**  
19665 Elfin Glen  
Escondido, CA 92029



Photos from Birdsong Botanic Gardens by the **Odds**.



## Feature article “Haworthia” Tom Glavich

(From *COMMUNIQUE*, the newsletter of the San Gabriel Cactus and Succulent Society, March 2004)

*Haworthia*, along with *Aloe* and *Gasteria* are part of the *Aloaceae* family. *Haworthia* are native exclusively to South Africa, and almost all from a Mediterranean environment not that different from Southern California. Most are easily grown, preferring some shade and growing mostly in the early autumn and spring through early summer.

The genus *Haworthia* is generally divided into retuse and non-retuse forms for shows. This month [March 2004], the entire genus of *Haworthia* is welcome [to the Mini Show]. We hope to have a great display of all the wonderful shapes, textures and colors that *Haworthia* can exhibit.

*Haworthia* are notable for their variety of appearance. Almost all of the species have varieties, forms, cultivars, and plants propagated from selected individuals. It is possible to develop a large collection of *Haworthia* with remarkable variation in shape, texture and form. Bruce Bayer's **Haworthia Revisited** is the best guide to forms, and intergrades between species.

There are roughly sixty species, however there is widespread disagreement on the meaning of the word species as applied to *Haworthia*. Many species intergrade, with gradual variation from one species to another. Intergrades between three or more species are also found. On top of this many species are highly variable. Bayer's books do a great job at classifying the species not only by species name, but also by locality.

*Haworthia* in general are tolerant of varying potting mixes, and success has been reported with everything from straight pumice to potting soil - pumice or perlite mixes, to plain potting soil, and even garden soil. They like light fertilization when growing, any balanced fertilizer will do. *Haworthia* can be naturalized as a ground cover, placed under shrub cover in shadier parts of California gardens.

Most of the plants in this genus offset easily, and propagation is easy from offsets. Offsets without roots will put out roots in just a few weeks. Seed is sometimes available, and easily germinates in cool weather, with best results coming in October, November and December. The trick with *Haworthia* seed is to get enough growth on the seedlings to allow them to survive their first summer dormancy. Most losses are due to heat and dry weather rather than over watering.

### **Haworthias to Hoard:**

*Haworthia comptoniana* is a large, smooth topped plant that offsets slowly. The leaves are triangular, and flat topped, covered with a pattern

of lines that occasionally break down into patterns of fine white dots. Each clone has a different pattern.

*Haworthia cooperi* is a fast growing species, with a many interesting forms that vary from having round tips to sharp points. The leaves are very fat and almost cylindrical. It is very easy to grow and make an impressive show specimen.

*Haworthia emelyae* has smooth flat topped triangular leaves with small white tubercles (dots) that converge into lines running to the point. The edges of the leaves near the center of the plant are almost blood red in winter.

*Haworthia lockwoodii* is one of a number of thin leaved forms. The species with thin leaves can take little water when dormant. The leaves curl around the growing tip, and the outer leaves turn brown as the growing tip is protected from the increasing heat of the summer.

*Haworthia pygmaea* has sharp pointed gray-green triangular leaves. The tubercles are extremely fine, giving the tops an almost felt like appearance. To the touch, they feel the same as very fine sandpaper. The sides of the leaves are perfectly smooth.

*Haworthia retusa* v. *acuminata* has long sharply pointed leaves, decorated with white lines and teeth on the edge that are not visible, but can be easily felt. The leaves are smooth near the center, and just slightly rough at the edge.



David & Eileen Tufenkian's  
*Haworthia truncata*

*Haworthia truncata*, shown in the picture is a superb plant. Easy to come by, it is slow, and takes several years to form good looking heads. This has been the subject of intense work by the Japanese, and a number of wonder patterns of white on green-gray have been developed and propagated.

*Haworthia venosa* ssp. *tessellata* has a large number of leaf forms in cultivation, some with delicate patterns formed in nearly flat tops, some deeply incurved as shown in the picture on the previous page. An interesting collection can be made of this species alone.



Dick Hulett's *Haworthia venosa* ssp. *Tessellata*

References:

M. B. Bayer, **Haworthia Revisited**  
J. Pilbeam, **Haworthia and Astroloba, A Collectors Guide**  
Sajeva and M. Costanzo, **Succulents, The Illustrated Dictionary**  
Pictures by **Tim Nomer**

## Feature article "Growing Mesembs" Phil Bunch

(reprinted from *Espinas y Flores*, February, 2000)



Titanopsis calcarea



Titanopsis primosii (added by editors)

For one reason or another, many people think mesembs are difficult to grow. Here in Southern California, nothing could be further from the truth. The vast majority of collectable mesembs come from part of Southern Africa where the climate is similar to ours. The key to good growing includes understanding their seasonal growth patterns, providing proper lighting, and a careful hand with watering and feeding.

### A Tale of Two Seasons

There is a tendency to think of mesembs as either winter or summer growers. This is deceptive. In fact, many are opportunistic and will grow whenever they get watered. A few, however, have very rigid growth patterns and die or become distorted if forced to grow out of season. Why is this so?

The basic answer is that Southern Africa is a land of diverse habitats. The western coast is dominated by sparse fall and winter rains with heavy fog and dew contributing to the available moisture. The east coast and much of the interior receive the majority of their precipitation during the summer. Winters are dry and can be quite cold in the interior. There are also areas that receive sparse rainfall during both summer and winter.

The key unifying factor is aridity. Few mesemb species grow where the annual rainfall exceeds 20 inches (about 500 mm) and most are found in drier areas. Another important variable is predictability. While the west coast has very low total rainfall, it is relatively consistent from year to

year. Precipitation in the arid summer rainfall areas is much less predictable.

You may say, "How is this supposed to help me grow better plants?" Just keep in mind that there is no such thing as a typical mesemb. Luckily, we can make some broad generalizations that will simplify our lives and get us off to a good start. There are a few special cases like Conophytum and Lithops, but we'll get to them later.

### General Rules and Other Lies

The first general rule is, there are no absolute rules! There are always exceptions and the scope of this article does not allow a complete treatment. That being said, we can go on to some helpful "lies."

The second general rule is, learn as much as you can about the plant you want to grow. Mesembs of the World (Smith et al., 1998) is a wonderful resource. Ed Storms' book, Growing the Mesembs (1976), is also good. Steve Hammer's books on Conophytum (Hammer, 1993) and Lithops (Hammer, 1999) are great resources for these special genera. By all means, chat with people at the SDCSS meetings. This may be the best source of local experience. If you have access to the internet, join the MESEMBS (all upper-case) community at <http://onelist.com/>. Once you are a member, you'll be in touch with over 600 mesemb lovers worldwide.

The third general rule is, if in doubt, don't water. If the leaves become shrunken and lost their turgidity, give them a bit more water. Even the winter growers benefit from occasional, light summer watering or frequent misting.

The fourth general rule is, give them plenty of light. Most mesembs do well in full sun and become ugly or die in heavy shade. Protection from excessive rainfall is generally wise.

The fifth general rule is, keep the air moving. Mesembs don't like stagnation.

General rule six is, feed lightly and only in the growing season. For most, formulations with relatively low nitrogen and higher potassium are good.

The seventh rule is, learn from your own experience. Everyone's conditions are a little different. If you lose a plant, don't worry. Everyone does, and those who deny it are probably not being fully candid!

### Some Special Cases

Conophytum are almost strictly cool season growers. However, almost all of them come from parts of Southern Africa where cool season rains predominate. Begin regular watering when the weather cools off during the fall. It's best to allow most species to nearly dry out during this part of the year but they do best if not grown too dry. During the coldest part

of the year, watering can be reduced. As spring arrives, resume more regular, if fairly light, watering. As summer approaches, the old bodies will begin to dry up and form a skin around the plant. This is normal and water should be reduced. When the skin is dry, regular watering should stop. Misting is beneficial during the dry season and, in fact, throughout the year. Most prefer to be shaded during the summer.

Lithops grow most actively from spring through late autumn. In general, they should be watered when the sides of the plants show wrinkles that persist for a day or more. After blooming the old bodies will begin to shrivel. This will be during the winter rather than in summer. At this time, they should be kept quite dry. Once the skin has a paper-like texture, it's time to start watering again. As they begin to grow more rapidly, they will appreciate additional water. During the later summer and fall, additional water also is appropriate. Once again, misting the plants is beneficial. Lithops like plenty of sunshine, but light shading may be beneficial during the hottest weather. During very hot periods, the plants may become semi-dormant and watering should be done with care. Feeding should be light and low nitrogen mixes are best.

#### Some General Groups

The following list provides guidelines to growing some of the more popular genera of mesembs. As with most lists, there are exceptions, but this will generally keep you out of trouble. I have borrowed heavily from **Steve Brack's** classifications in the Mesa Garden catalog (1999).

Generally vigorous, summer growers: these include Aptenia, Delosperma, Drosanthemum, Erepsia, and Lampranthus.

Spring to fall growers, mostly compact plants best kept cool and dry during the winter including: Acrodon, Aloinopsis, Bergeranthus, Carru-anthus, Chasmatophyllum, Faucaria, Frithia, Hereroa, Marlothistella, Mestoklema, Nananthus, Neohenricia, Pleiospilos (most species), Rabiea, Rhinephyllum, Rhombophyllum, Stomatium, Titanopsis, and Trichodiadema.

Late summer to late winter growers: preferring frequent light watering and misting while active. Dormant from spring through summer, but best with some shade and misting while not in active growth. These include: Antimima, Argyroderma, Cheiridopsis, Conophytum, Dactylo-opsis (Phyllobolus), Diplosoma, Jacobsenia, Maughaniella (Diplosoma), Meyerophytum, Mitrophyllum, Monilaria, and Oophytum.

Opportunistic growers: will grow if temperatures, sunlight and watering allow, but may become dormant during very hot weather. Among these are: Antegibbaeum, Bijlia, Braunsia, Cephalophyllum, Cerochlamys, Cylindrophyllum, Didymaotus, Dinteranthus, Dracophilus, Ebracteola, Fenestraria, Gibbaeum, Glottiphyllum, Imitaria, Jensenobotrya, Juttadinteria, Lapidaria, Malephora, Namibia, Odontophorus, Psammo-

phora, Schwantesia, Sphalmanthus (Phyllobolus), Tanquana and Van-heerdea.

There is no reason why we can't grow superior mesembs here in San Diego. The rewards are well worth the effort, if effort it is!

#### Literature Cited

- Brack, S. 1999. Mesa Garden Catalog. Belen, New Mexico.  
 Hammer, S. 1999. Lithops: Treasures of the Veld. British Cactus and Succulent Society.  
 Hammer, S. 1993. Conophytum: A Conograph. Succulent Plant Publications. Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.  
 Storms, E. 1976 Growing the Mesembs. Azle, Texas.  
 Smith, G., Chesselet, P., van Jaarsveld, E., Hartmann, H., Hammer, S., van Wyk, B., Burgoyne, P., Klak, C. and Kurzwell, H. 1998. Briza Publications. Pretoria, Republic of South Africa.

## Electronic Espinas Y Flores

The newsletter is available for viewing and downloading at the Club website, [www.sdcss.net](http://www.sdcss.net). Take a look! All members are urged to accept the e-mailed version of the newsletter in lieu of a bulk-mailed hardcopy. Each month, you will be notified by e-mail of the availability of your next issue, the speakers and events at the next meeting, and other significant announcements. **The electronic version contains extra color images not found in the hardcopy**, and a high resolution version, from which fully detailed images can be downloaded, is also available. Further, updates and errors found in the hardcopy are corrected in the electronic version. To cancel your hard copy, contact the membership chairperson **Collette Parr** at [collette.parr@cox.net](mailto:collette.parr@cox.net).

## Shots from Lotusland Downloaded from the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Facebook Page, Photos by Collette Parr





More Shots from Lotusl and  
Downloaded from the San Diego Cactus and Succulent So-  
ciety Facebook Page, Photos by Collette Parr



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Have you been down to ground level lately? I mean "the ground", not fallen, but un-fallen as in "deliberate".



(Consider the view from down there. Quite something else; but I won't go into that here.) The idea is "getting up" from "down there". Can you picture eons ago, one of our ancestral fish wriggling to shore? Well you can bet he, she or it never made it upright not until she, he, or it developed workable appendages at the four corners. They could not have been rubbery.



So are you still with me? Down on the ground? Now get up. You might observe some of our pre-schoolers. Soon after they have developed walking legs, they really take the prize for quick ups and downs. You, however, don't have to do it fast. Just develop your own technique. It is a great exercise for doing once a day.



You will bless me next time **you** hit ground Level, undeliberately.

(Next installment in this series will deal with how glad you should be you're not a centipede: after a bad **fall**, 50 broken legs! Lucky you, you only have two to break!



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Oct. 22-23:** Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society Show and Sale at San Diego Botanic Garden (Quail Gardens). Show: Saturday 12-3PM, Sale: Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-4. Half price to SDCSS members with ID.

**Nov. 5-6:** San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at LA County Arboretum, 301 No. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA.

**Nov. 12:** SDCSS Meeting, 1:00 pm in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. The speaker will be Tim Harvey talking about a recent trip to Namibia.

**Dec. 10:** SDCSS Holiday Party! 12 noon, in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Gift plants, auction, gift exchange, FOOD and DRINK!

### Snacks for the Break:

If your last name begins with A—M, please bring a snack to share at the break.

## SDCSS WANT ADS

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

<b>Strategic Team Members</b> to support the Strategy Owners in initiating changes in SDCSS	<b>Ride coordinator:</b> Point of contact for those members who need a ride to meetings and those willing to give rides.	<b>Trophy Sponsorship:</b> We are in the process of updating trophies and are looking for donations to support the process.
<b>Tour Chair</b> to arrange Coffee in the Garden tours on a monthly basis	<b>Workshop Chair</b> to run workshop program, set up speakers and topics	<b>Trophy Chair</b> to maintain trophies and oversee their refurbishment
<b>Volunteers for WAP Gardens:</b> For garden maintenance, new area development, plant identification and to work in the greenhouse, Our next project will be to build a greenhouse and we hope to start later this fall	<b>Holiday Party Decorating Committee Members:</b> to help decorate for the Holiday Party.	

Contact **Chris Miller** if you are interested.

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.

The due date for submission of all material to be published in EyF will be the second-to-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](mailto:pdmaker@roadrunner.com).



**SDC&SS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM**

Dues are \$15.00 per year per individual, and \$5.00 per year for each additional household member. Newsletter is E-mailed. **Mailed paper copies are available for an additional \$5 a year.** *Each member has all the rights and benefits of the organization.*

Annual Dues – (E-mail Newsletter) \$15.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
 First class delivery USPS (Paper Newsletter) \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Annual Dues – International (Paper) \$30.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional Household Member(s) \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check **ONE** for type of membership: **NEW** \_\_\_\_\_ **RENEWAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member Information:**  
**(Please PRINT to fill in ALL blanks below!!!)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City and State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip + 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell/FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Household Members:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you wish to receive E-mail notifications of Club events and issues?**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail this form or a copy, along with a check or money order payable in US Funds to SDCSS to:**

**SDCSS Membership Department  
 c/o Collette Parr  
 7924 Grape Street  
 La Mesa Ca 91941-6323**

**(Rev. D-1, 2011-04-12)**

*San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society*

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**Kelly Griffin**  
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