

# On the Dry Side

Newsletter of the Monterey Bay Cactus & Succulent Society

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*Pseudolithos migiurtinus*

This charmer exemplifies an Asclepiad listed by our speaker for September (see p. 2).

## President's Message

By Tom Karwin

The Society's 2016 Fall Show and Sale is scheduled for Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, and Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. This event deserves your attention for several reasons. First, the fall and spring shows and sales are fine opportunities for succulent gardeners to acquire new plants for their collections. Plant (and container) selections are exceptional, purchasing is convenient, and prices are favorable.

Second, both the shows and the sales contribute effectively to the Society's mission, which seeks to encourage the cultivation of cacti and succulent plants. The show presents excellent specimens, which inspire beginners and expert growers to enjoy the challenges and rewards of gardening with unusual succulent plants. Highly qualified experts judge plants in the spring show, while the fall show invites members of the public to vote on their favorites. Consider showing your prized plants!

Third, these events generate income for the Society, which covers all sale-related expenses in return for a share of the proceeds. This plan, which is popular with many cactus & succulent societies works well for the vendors.

Every member can help the 20167 Fall Show & Sale succeed by showing or selling plants, attending the event and buying plants, and publicizing the event for their friends and neighbors. We are providing a digital poster with this newsletter for each member to print and share with others. We will also send digital \$1 discount coupons for members to print and share with friends and neighbors. Let's work together to have a great sale!

## Save the Date!

### MBCASS Meets

**Sept. 18, 2016**

Gathering @ 12:00

Potluck lunch @ 12:30

Program @ 1:00

### Board Meets

**Sept. 18, 2016**

Board meets @ 11:00

Members are always welcome to attend

### Future Meetings

**Third Sundays**

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1716

1960 Freedom Blvd.

Visitors are welcome!

## Preview of the September Program

# Succulent Asclepiads

By Joseph Hidalgo

Note: This article provides background for Joseph Hidalgo's presentation at our meeting.

## Asclepiads: Getting Bit by the Bug Again

By Joseph Hidalgo

My interest in plant genera grows and wanes with the actual growth activity of my collection. I get excited in the fall when the winter growers are doing their thing, I find myself purchasing strange South African bulbs, Conophytums, Othonnas, Tylecodons, Pelargonium species and perhaps a book or two on them. As spring approaches and the winter growers are going to sleep, the summer growers start showing signs of life. I switch gears and get interested in the caudiciforms, Pachypodiums, medusoid Euphorbias and caudiciform Euphorbias. Of these I did notice I am missing a group, the Asclepiads.

I feel like the deeper one gets into a hobby, the more one will push themselves. In regards to plants, "pushing myself" as an advanced hobbyist falls within three categories: price, rarity, and difficulty in cultivation. My last serious foray into the world of Asclepiads ended in failure and ultimately disinterest in the genus.

Two summers ago I had invested in three species of Larryleachia, a genus that fits all of the three categories. They came to me via Hungary from eBay, and were seed grown. All summer long they did great, blooming in halos of flowers. They got occasional water, which was reduced as fall approached as it suddenly got cool after being hot. Having wet pumice stand for more than a day was enough to rot the investment. Ever get the case where you ask yourself, "I wish I bought two!"

Such was the case when I rotted my Whiteslonea crassa at the same time the Larryleachias went to my garden on the other side. You can't get any rarer than Whiteslonea, it is a species on the bucket list for many in the hobby and not just for fans of Stapeliads. After the Larryleachias turned to goo, I was prepared. I noticed the body was losing turgidity, so I checked the base. Sure enough rot had started. I decapitated it and called Diane S. on emergency asking for a Hoodia start (I gave her a good plant in a gallon pot, I knew was still in her collection and growing strong, a few years back.) and promptly grafted the Whiteslonea on the rooted end of the Hoodia plant. It looks really rough but it is still alive.

Further losses included Pseudolithos cubiformis (surprise, surprise); an unnamed species of tuberous Ceropegia from Lake Tanganyika; Ceropegia serpentis (lost to mealy bugs); and a Brachystelma which just melted for no reason. People say I am a great grower, though if you can see the trail of death I have left in my wake you may think otherwise!

After the last show and sale, while bringing my plants home and cleaning and editing the collection, I did notice that a few well-grown Asclepiads missed the show. I had all my XL caudiciform Raphionacme sp. coming out of dormancy, spending the winter outside and protected from rain. I was surprised to see I had forgotten about my seed-grown Quaqua mammilaris, hidden on the top shelf, getting every winter storm, hail and frost, growing strong with no signs of damage. The Quaqua was left there in the summer to experiment to see the degree of wet it could stand, as it is a winter grower. Test past!

Orbea variegata also left out in the El Nino rains, turgid from the rain, was saying, "Is that all you got?" [This plant is] the "Terminator of the Asclepiads," indestructible with a dramatic flower to boot. Gone are the Hoodias, which grew to impressive sizes, sold to make room for other plants.

The lesson I learned is that to be successful in gardening it is best to work with nature. There are plenty of Asclepiads coming from the seasonal Mediterranean parts of South Africa that mimic our climate: Orbea (some), Hoodia, Quaqua, and Piranthus can get winter water, while Duvalia, Huernia, Stapelia, Raphionacme, and others can take the seasonal temperature changes, though are guaranteed if you mind their growth pattern and give them summer water instead. There are also a number of odd Carallumas coming from Southern Europe or North Africa, I have yet to grow.

Asclepiads should get screened and treated for mealy bugs biannually even if they are not visible, as they are a death sentence left untreated.

For those of you braving something even more exotic or unseen locally, do your research. See where it grows. If it is more tropical it will need the warmest brightest indoor spot for the winter and will generally be safe to be outside if nights are over 55° F. West-facing windows will fill up quickly!

Whatever you call them they are fun to grow and it is an accomplishment to see them flower. Though best to keep flowering plants outside lest you come home to the other person at home frantically cleaning the fridge.

# Minutes of the MBACSS Board Meeting, August 2016

By Stan Verkler (edited by Tom Karwin)

**Attendance:** Naomi Bloss, Jeff Brooks, Tom Karwin, Sharon Lucchesi, Ruth Pantry, Stan Verkler

Absent: Linda McNally, Gary Stubblefield, Manson Waters

**Guests:** Linda Waters, Jorge Quiñonez

**Approval of Minutes:** The Board approved the minutes of the June 2016 meeting as published.

**Treasurer's Report:** Ruth Pantry presented the current financial report, showing good income from the silent auction during July's meeting, which celebrated the Society's anniversary. The financial report is available to members upon request.

**CSSA Report:** Jeff Brooks reported there was no new information from CSSA.

**Program:** Naomi Bloss reported that Ernesto Sandoval would be available to present a program for the Society. This suggestion was referred to Program Chair Manson Waters.

Jeff Brooks proposed revision of mini-show rules and parameters. The Board discussed several issues. Jeff will present revised rules, based on this discussion, for Board approval.

**Sunshine Committee:** The Board discussed Sunshine guidelines proposed by Sharon Lucchesi. She will present revised guidelines, based on this discussion, for Board approval. (Note: The revised guidelines are presented below.)

## OLD BUSINESS

**Fall Show & Sale:** Linda Waters indicated that plants displayed at the Fall Show are not judged, but rather are voted upon by members of the public. During the general meeting, Linda will invite members to volunteer at the show, and will recruit a hospitality chairperson. Also during the general meeting, Tom Karwin will recruit someone to design a poster for the Fall Show.

The Board approved the purchase of one set of portable LED lights for evaluation. Stan Verkler will arrange the purchase, will confer with Fred Valentine regarding light quality, and will contact Elton Roberts regarding ideas for light stands.

**Spring Show & Sale:** Stan Verkler provided an update on the search for a new venue for the Spring Show & Sale. Sites under consideration include Soquel High School and the Simkins Family Swim Center. Naomi Bloss will convene a meeting in October or November to review and update Show categories and rules.

**Projection Screen Upgrade:** Tom Karwin will contact the VFW Hall's new post commander, Daniel Magdaleno, who has replaced David Ambriz, who had confirmed that the VFW would share the cost of a new projection screen.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Third Show:** Tom Karwin proposed scheduling a third show & sale, designed to be more accessible to the Santa Cruz area public. For discussion, the show would be (a) located at the Museum of Art and History in Santa Cruz, (b) include the sale of larger plants, and (c) include educational activities. Naomi observed that a plant auction might be more appropriate than a conventional sale. Due to the lack of time, this discussion was carried over to the Board's September meeting.

# Proposed Sunshine Guidelines

By Sharon Lucchesi

## Member Ill or Hospitalized:

If a member is ill, a card will be sent. Generally, if a member is hospitalized overnight, flowers (bud vase, etc.), balloon or some other token of our concern may be sent, unless it is for a routine test or something of this nature. Price range of \$35.00. With approval of the ill member and/or her family, the membership will be notified of the illness via email, or other means.

## Immediate Family Member Ill or Hospitalized:

A card will be sent. With approval of the ill member and/or her family, membership will be notified of the illness via email, or other means.

## Death of Member or Immediate Household:

Sympathy Card will be sent. In the event of the death of a member, flowers or a donation of \$50. will be sent to a charity chosen by the family, or the Board. For the death of a relative or partner living in the home of a member, flowers, plant or donation of \$35.00 will be sent to a charity chosen by the family. The dollar amount can be decided by the Board in certain circumstances.

With approval of the family, membership will be notified via email or other means.

# MBACSS Calendar for 2016

| MONTH   | PROGRAM                                                                                                                | CACTUS MINI-SHOW                                                                     | SUCCULENT MINI-SHOW                                               |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1/17    | Colors and Shapes of Mexican Succulents (Steve McCabe narrated the slide show)                                         | Mammillaria                                                                          | Aeonium                                                           |
| 2/21    | Steve McCabe: Growing and Conserving Rare Succulents: Threats to Dudleyas                                              | Baja California: Cochemiea, Ferocactus, Myrtillocactus, Pachycereus, and Stenocereus | Dudleya                                                           |
| 3/20    | Rob Skillin: Cacti of the Central Andean Cordillera                                                                    | Ariocarpus, Astrophytum                                                              | Aloes in bloom                                                    |
| 4/17    | Naomi Bloss: Planting, Growing and Showing Succulents                                                                  | Rebutia, (including Sulcorebutia) Echinopsis (Lobivia)                               | Mesems, e.g., Lithops, Conophyllum, Cheiridopsis. Pleiospilos     |
| 4/23-24 | <a href="#">Monterey Bay Cactus &amp; Succulent Society</a> —Spring Show & Sale, San Juan Batista, CA (Set-up on 4/22) |                                                                                      |                                                                   |
| 5/15    | Jeff Moore: Under the Spell of Succulents                                                                              | Echinocereus, Parodia (Notocactus)                                                   | Crassula                                                          |
| 6/19    | Peter Wachowiak Landscaping with Succulents                                                                            | Mammillaria, Escobaria                                                               | Sedum, Sempervivum, Jovibarba                                     |
| 7/17    | Gunnar Eisel: Building and Maintaining a Cactus and Succulent Collection'                                              | Ferocactus, Blossfeldia (cancelled)                                                  | Euphorbia, Stapelia (cancelled)                                   |
| 8/21    | The Country Store                                                                                                      | No mini-show                                                                         | No mini-show                                                      |
| → 9/18  | Joseph Hidalgo: Succulent Asclepiads                                                                                   | Coryphanha, Tephrocactus                                                             | Senecio                                                           |
| 10/1-2  | <a href="#">Monterey Bay Cactus &amp; Succulent Society</a> —Fall Show & Sale, San Juan Batista, CA (Set-up on 9/30)   |                                                                                      |                                                                   |
| 10/16   | TBA                                                                                                                    | Copiapoa, Cephalocereus                                                              | AGAVACEAE: Agave, Yucca. Beschorneria, Fucraee, Manfreda, Mangave |
| 11/20   | TBA                                                                                                                    | Opuntia, Rhipsalis, Schlumberger.                                                    | Any caudiciform or pachycaul succulent                            |
| 12/18   | Christmas Party                                                                                                        | No mini-show                                                                         | No mini-show                                                      |

## CSS EVENTS ELSEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA

|         |                                                                                                                                |  |  |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| 4/2-3   | <a href="#">San Jose Cactus &amp; Succulent Society</a> , Show & Sale, Sunnyvale                                               |  |  |
| 4/23-24 | <a href="#">Huntington Botanical Gardens</a> —42nd Annual Spring Plant Sale, San Marino (members only 4/23)                    |  |  |
| 5/14    | <a href="#">Santa Barbara Cactus &amp; Succulent Society</a> —Annual Plant Sale, Santa Barbara                                 |  |  |
| 5/28-29 | Central Coast Cactus & Succulent Society—Annual Show & Sale, San Luis Obispo                                                   |  |  |
| 6/4-5   | Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society—Summer Show & Sale, Clovis                                                                   |  |  |
| 6/11-12 | <a href="#">Los Angeles Cactus &amp; Succulent Society</a> Plant Show & Sale, Encino                                           |  |  |
| 6/11-12 | <a href="#">San Francisco Succulent &amp; Cactus &amp; Society</a> Show & Sale, San Francisco                                  |  |  |
| 7/1-3   | <a href="#">Cactus &amp; Succulent Society of America</a> —51th Annual Show and Sale, Huntington Botanical Gardens, San Marino |  |  |
| 8/13-14 | <a href="#">31<sup>st</sup> Intercity Show &amp; Sale</a> , Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia                              |  |  |
| 9/2     | Huntington Symposium, <a href="#">Huntington Botanical Gardens</a> , San Marino                                                |  |  |

# September's Mini-Show Plants

by Jeff Brooks

## Succulents

Senecio

**Senecio** is a genus of the daisy family (Asteraceae), which includes ragworts and groundsels. The scientific Latin genus name, Senecio, means "old man."

Despite the separation of many species into other genera, the genus still contains c. 1,250 species and is one of the largest genera of flowering plants.

No morphological synapomorphies (i.e., distinguishing characters) are known to determine which species belong to the genus or not, so no exact species numbers are known. The genus, which is distributed nearly worldwide, evolved in the mid- to late-Miocene.

This very large genus can be represented best by the "type species," *S. vulgaris*. This is shown here in a drawing from *Atlas des plantes de France* (1891), provided by Wikimedia Commons.



## Cacti

Coryphantha, Tephrocactus

**Coryphantha** (from Greek, "flowering on the top"), or Beehive Cactus, is a genus of small to middle-sized, globose or columnar cacti. The genus is native to arid parts of Central America, Mexico, through Arizona, New Mexico, and western Texas and north into southwestern, central, and southeastern Montana. With two subgenera, 57 species and 20 subspecies, it is one of the largest genera of cactus.

**Tephrocactus** (from Greek tephra, "ash") is a genus of the cactus family (Cactaceae). (Wikimedia).



*T. alexanderi*

*C. sulcolanata*

(both images are from Wikimedia Commons)

## Look at a Book

by Suzi Brooks

A recent addition to the MBACSS Library is Jeff Moore's new book, *Aloes and Agaves in Cultivation* (2016). You may recall Jeff's talk in May of this year: "Under the Spell of Succulents." On that occasion, he announced his newest book, and even showed a pre-release copy. We now have a copy available for checkout by Society members.

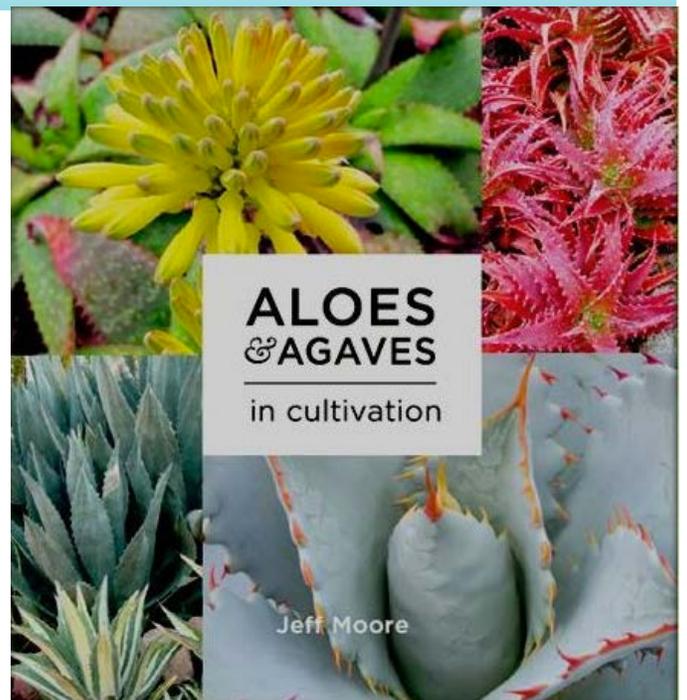
Here's a review by [Chuck Everson, Bookseller](#):

"Finally, a book that everyone has been waiting for! Jeff Moore released his new publication on June 11, 2016.

"Jeff takes you on a visual tour of aloes and agaves in cultivation, highlighting both the common and some of the more rare specimens, with pertinent information and growing tips gleaned from years of experience.

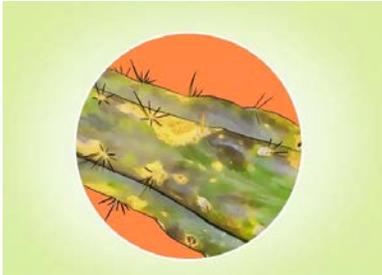
"Hundreds and hundreds of color photos (almost 1,000), with some of the best information on culture, care, history of these wonderful plants.

"A huge book! 335 pages, 10" x 10", softbound."



# Troubleshooting Common Cactus Problems

Part 3 of 3 a three-part series from WikiHow



**1. Prevent rot by avoiding over-watering.** One of the most common problems when it comes to potted plants is fungal rot (also called *root rot*). This affliction typically occurs when the roots of a plant are held in contact with moisture that is unable to properly drain, which becomes stagnant and encourages fungal growth. This can happen to most potted plants, but desert cacti are especially susceptible as they naturally require only a small amount of water compared to other plants. The best cure for rot is a preventative one: simply avoid over-watering in the first place. As a general rule, it's better to under-water than to over-water when it comes to cacti. You'll also want to use a good-quality potting soil with a high level of drainage for all cacti.

If your plant has rot, it may appear swollen, soft, brownish, and/or decayed, with the possibility of splits in its surface. Often, but not always, this condition moves from the bottom of the plant up. The options for treating rot after it has set in are limited. You can try to remove the cactus from its pot, cut away any slimy, blackened roots and any dead tissue above ground, and re-plant it in a new container with clean soil. However, if the damage to the roots is extensive, it may die anyway. In many cases, it's necessary to discard plants with rot to prevent the spread of the fungus to other adjacent plants. [Click for more about cacti pests and diseases.](#)

**2. Gradually increase exposure to sunlight to treat etiolation.** Etiolation is a condition in which a plant experiences pale, sickly growth because it is not exposed to enough light. Cacti with etiolated growth will often have a thin, flimsy quality and a pale, light-green color. The etiolated portion of the plant will grow towards a nearby light source, if there are any. While etiolation is permanent in the sense that any sickly growth that has already occurred cannot be reversed, future etiolation can be curbed by ensuring the plant receives a sufficient amount of sunlight.

However, you won't want to throw a cactus with etiolated growth into intense, direct sunlight immediately. Instead, gradually increase the amount of sun the plant receives each day until you notice that its growth has become normal. Exposing *any* plant to drastically increased sunlight can be stressful for the plant, while exposing an etiolated cactus to such levels of sunlight can be fatal.

**3. Avoid phototoxicity by limiting sun exposure after using pesticides.** If you've ever noticed that you've gotten an especially bad sunburn after being in water, you've experienced something similar to phototoxicity, a harmful malady that can affect your plant. After applying an oil-based pesticide to a plant, the oil from the pesticide remains on the surface of the plant, acting as a sort of "tanning lotion" by increasing the intensity of the sun's rays. This can cause the portions of the plant on which the oil is present to become burnt, grey, and dried-out. To prevent this, place the cactus in a shaded location for a few days until the oil-based pesticide has done its work before returning it to the sun.

**4. Don't be frightened by natural "corking".** One aspect of the cactus life cycle with which most people are not familiar is the process of "corking", in which the bottom portions of a mature cactus slowly start to develop a tough, brown, bark-like exterior. Though this condition can appear serious because it replaces the natural green exterior with one that appears dead, it's not actually a sign that the plant is in any danger and can usually be ignored.

Natural corking usually starts at the base of the plant and can slowly creep upwards. If the corking starts elsewhere on the plant, this *can* be a sign of a problem. For instance, if the top of the cactus and the side facing the sun bear this weathered appearance but the base of the cactus does not, this can be a sign that the cactus is receiving too much sun, rather than the result of natural corking.



## Mark Wainer: Photographic Art—A 50 Year Retrospective

Local photographer Mark Wainer has interest in a wide range of subjects for his photographic artistry. He has discovered the aesthetic qualities of succulent plants, and has been creating visual studies of their forms and textures. A favorite location for his photographic work is Succulent Gardens, near Moss Landing.

Mark Wainer has graciously shared two of his photographs for display in this newsletter. They are #53 (above) and #63 (below).

Samples of Wainer's photos of succulent plants are on display as part of his current show at the R. Blitzer Gallery in Santa Cruz. The large photos enhance the viewing experience, in comparison to smaller images in print or online. For information on the show, which continues through October 1<sup>st</sup>, visit the [gallery's website](#).

To see three portfolios of his photographs of succulent plants, visit [Mark Wainer's website](#) and click on Succulent Garden 1, Succulent Garden 2, and Succulent Garden 3.

The plants are identified only by numbers, not botanical or common names. This approach focuses attention on the aesthetic value of the plant's physical characteristics, rather than their genus or species.

At the same time, labeling photos with numbers present naming challenges for avid gardeners of succulent plants.

Gardeners who have taken snapshots of their succulent plants will appreciate the artistic techniques that Wainer applies to present his subjects at their best. It is also noteworthy that his subjects are free of any signs of pests or diseases.



The Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society  
presents the

## 2016 FALL SHOW & SALE

9–5, Saturday, October 1 and 9–4, Sunday, October 2

San Juan Batista Community Hall  
10 San Jose Street, San Juan Batista

# Officers and Chairpersons, 2016

## CHAIRPERSONS

LIBRARIAN — Suzy Brooks  
 MINI-SHOW — Jeff Brooks  
 NEWSLETTER EDITOR— Tom Karwin  
 PROGRAMS — Manson Waters  
 PUBLICITY — Sharon Lucchesi  
 RAFFLES — Gary Stubblefield  
 Roster — Ruth Pantry  
 SALE — Gary Stubblefield & Lynda Waters  
 SHOW—Naomi Bloss & Janet Sparks  
 WEBMASTER — Anita Crawley

## Members Update

### Welcome to New Members

Kathy O'Mara  
 Lila Rampone  
 Bunny Bahador

### Sunshine Report

Linda McNally sends her thanks for the Society's well wishes for her recovery from her recent hospitalization. She wrote, "I love the pot and it was great to see Sharon the day she came by even though it was a very short hello." Linda expects to attend our September meeting!



*Orbea variegata*

This is the "Terminator of the Asclepiads" mentioned by Joseph Hidalgo (p. 2). Image from [The Asclepiad Page](#).



## On the Dry Side

Monterey Bay Area Cactus & Succulent Society  
<http://mbsucculent.org>