



Succulent Scoop
Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society
CSSA Affiliate

November 2025 Volume 10 Number 10

Mission Statement:

The Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society encourages the study, cultivation, conservation, and appreciation of cacti and other succulent plants.

Email: ConejoCSS@hotmail.com Facebook: Conejo Cactus & Succulent Society Web: ConejoCSS.com

Wednesday November 5th - Doors Open at 6:00 - Meeting starts at 7:00

*California Lutheran University - Lundring Events Center
130 Overton Court Thousand Oaks, CA. 91360*



Biography: Nick Renteria



Born and raised in Southern California, Nick developed a love for gardening at an early age. After working in accounting and IT, he pursued his love of gardening by completing the Certificate Program in Gardening and Horticulture through UCLA Extension in 2017. After retiring in 2021, he has devoted his free time to the world of cactus and succulents, where he currently serves as the Chair of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America Show and Sale, and the President of the San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society.

Presentation



Thailand is well known for its orchids, but most people are probably unaware that the relatively warm year-round climate proves to be a near ideal climate for many of our cacti and succulents. Join Nick as he takes us on a journey to visit two of the largest botanical gardens in Thailand, including the Nong Nooch Tropical Garden in Pattaya, which is frequently ranked as one of the top 20 gardens in the world.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE November 2025

On October 21, 2025, we held our first 'in-person' board meeting since Covid.

- 1) Updating our website. Now our homepage will have our logo, and all the tabs will be updated with correct dates and flyers. In other words—our website will get a 'face-lift.'
- 2) New badges.'Unfortunately, the company we have been using since day one kept raising their prices without any forewarning. In the past year they've gone from \$15 to \$17, to their current price of \$20. Not only did the board feel members would be reluctant to spend \$20 on a badge. We also felt we needed a badge with our logo on it. We searched the internet for another company and found one in Florida. Their pricing allows us to maintain the current pricing of \$15 even with shipping. We were told one of the main reasons they are less expensive was due to raw materials. They are much less in Florida. We hope everyone will want one of the new badges, but if you are happy with your original one, that's fine too.



- 3) Upcoming Holiday Party. Everyone agreed to the credo "If it ain't broke, why try to fix it." Everyone seems to love our parties, so everything will stay the same. You may want to begin thinking about plants you'd like to donate to the auction. Due to time constraints, we limit the number of plants being auctioned to 19. If you have plants you'd like to donate please email me a picture so I can keep track of what we have.

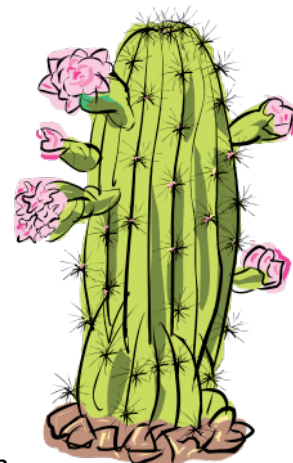
Other points of discussion were our Spring Sale and T-shirts. Lisa has volunteered to work on getting T-shirts for the club. She should have more information, and maybe a sample, at our November meeting.

As for our Spring Sale 2026, our club is going to apply for grant money offered by the CCSA to do some kind of cactus and succulent education for kids. We have decided to set up a 'Kids Kactus Korner'. An easy-up with different activities for kids 4-12. Jonathan has offered to be a big part of running it. That sums up our board meeting.

Our fall sale, all in all wasn't one of our better sales for various reasons. We had 6 vendors who could not participate leaving us with only 15 instead of the usual 21. Even with all the advertising we did, the foot traffic left a lot to be desired. Some vendors did very well, others not so well. The club ended up making approximately \$1900 to \$2700 at our April Sale.

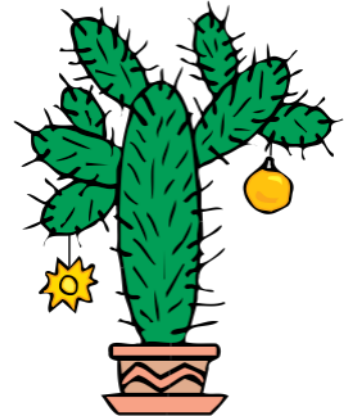
I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at our November meeting to hear your comments on our new badges.

Linda Holub - CCSS President





Holiday Party 2025 - Wednesday December 3rd



Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society HOLIDAY PARTY

December 4th 6:00-9:00 pm

Pot Luck - whosbringingwhat.com/ccss

Plant of The Month - Favorites

Optional Gift Exchange - Plant related gift in the \$15-20 range

Auction - Exciting selection donated by members and supporters of CCSS

Come and enjoy good food, friends, cactus and succulent fun!

Doors will be open at 5:30.

Potluck dinner will begin 6:00. Come early to help set up the feast!



Refreshments 2025



If your last name begins with **W, X, Y, Z** please bring refreshments to share at the October meeting.

Coffee is courtesy of Terry Wilson. Water supplied by the club.

Anyone is welcome to bring additional refreshments.

December Meeting will be our Holiday Potluck dinner.



**Volunteers, suggestions and
comments are always welcome!**

WHO TO CONTACT?

Below is listed Conejo Cactus and Succulent Society's current Officers and Board members.

All members are welcome to politely express any questions, concerns, ideas or improvements to any of the CCSS officers. This is your club and we are your elected officers.

Come up to us at a meeting, call or email.

Club email is ConejoCSS@hotmail.com.

President Linda Holub - cactuscougar@icloud.com 805-501-0761

Vice-President Donna Pachorek - dpachorek@gmail.com

CCSS 2025 Officers

President

Linda Holub

Treasurer

Chris Gailey

Director II, Education

Terry Wilson

Website

Tim Alvord

1st VP, Programs

Donna Pachorek

Secretary

Alex Holub

Scoop Editor

Ann Hopkinson

Librarian

Glen Smith

2nd VP, POM & Education

Kyle Williams

Director I, Membership

Glen Smith

Hospitality

Julie Cox & Liz Gollner

Propagation

Terry Wilson

3rd VP, Special Events

Lisa Gailey

Assistant to Director I

Pam Smith, Membership

Drawing Coordinator

Gerry Caruso

Event Publicity

Lisa Gailey

Plant of the Month 2025

Month	Cactus	Succulent
January	None	None
February	Ariocarpus & Obregonia	Lithops & Conophytum
March	Gymnocalycium	Echeveria & Dudleya
April	Miniatures	Miniatures
May	Echinocereus	Terrestrial Bromeliads
June	Echinopsis/ Lobivia	Dorstenia & Ficus
July	Mammillaria	Euphorbia
August	Opuntia & relatives	Adenium
September	Astrophytum	Stapeliads
October	Variegates	Variegates
November	Copiapoa	Aloe
December	Favorites	Favorites

Plant of the Month (POM) What is this all about?

Each meeting of the CCSS will feature a friendly plant show/competition (POM). The goal of the POM is to introduce the membership to the various cactus and succulent genera and to open up a discussion of the culture, care and display of these plants. We encourage members to share their plants with the other members of CCSS.

POM Submissions

Members may submit up to (3) three plants in each of the two categories (Cactus and Succulent). Plants entered in the intermediate and Advanced Divisions must have been owned and maintained by the member for a minimum of one year. Plants entered in the Novice Division may be newly acquired plants.

POM Divisions

Novice: 0-25 Total points

Intermediate: 26-100 Total Points

Advanced: >100 Total points

When a member has accumulated the total number points in their Division, they will be moved up to the next higher Division in the following calendar year.

POM Judging Criteria

Plants are evaluated according to the following criteria.

Condition (health, form, damage) – 50%

Maturity and Size – 25%

Staging (artistic composition – container, stonework, etc) – 20%

Nomenclature (proper plant identification) – 5%

Additional criteria may include rarity, difficulty in growing, and whether the plant is in flower.

POM Judging

1st Place – 6 points

2nd Place – 3 points

3rd Place – 2 points

All other entries will be awarded 1 point. Entry slips will be collected by the POM Coordinator for tabulation, record keeping and publication in the CCSS Newsletter.

We encourage all members to participate in the POM. This is your opportunity to show off your prized treasures or to possibly learn how to better care for your plants.

November 2025 Cactus of the Month - Copiapoa

Copiapoa

Copiapoa is a genus of spectacular cacti from the Atacama Desert along the north coast of Chile. *Copiapoa* were first collected in the 1840s, and described as *Echinocactus*, then the home to any of the more or less globular cacti. The genus *Copiapoa* was named by Britton and Rose in 1922 in their great work *The Cactaceae*. The name derives from Chilean province of Copiapo, home of many of the species. Currently 26 species of *Copiapoa* are generally recognized. Species of this genus are relatively small, though they can form large clumps. The largest species rarely surpass three feet in height, while the smallest species, *C. laui*, rivals *Blossfeldia* for the title of world's smallest cactus.



Copiapoa laui



Copiapoa lembeckei

The habitat of *Copiapoa* is incredibly dry, even by desert standards. They occur in the Atacama, the world's driest desert. The average rainfall in the region is 1mm/year (0.04 inches). Many areas get rainfall only once every four years and some weather stations have never recorded a single drop of rain! Interestingly *Copiapoa* thrives in these extreme conditions to the extent that the genus peters out at the northern and southern ends of its range because these areas are where rainfall starts to become more regular and predictable.

How can any plant, even a cactus, survive in a climate where years can go by without rain? They do it by living off the fog that regularly covers the coastal regions of northern Chile. Anyone living in coastal California in June knows this gloomy fog all too well. Surely, we've all noticed our plants, and pretty much any outside surface, covered in moisture condensed from the fog on overcast mornings. Without this fog, even *Copiapoa* could not survive in the Atacama Desert.

Copiapoa live along the coast and through the river valleys cut through the coastal mountains. The hills and valleys of Northern Chile are still not well explored from a botanical point of view. When these areas have been explored new species have been found, and it is likely more will be found in the future.

Given these extremely dry conditions, one would expect cultivation to be difficult in our comparatively wet Southern California winters. Fortunately, this is not so, and *Copiapoa* are relatively easy to grow. They respond happily to the same potting mix, watering, and fertilization as most cacti. When given favorable growing conditions these plants develop many times faster than they would in their native habitat. Some species can even be grown in the open ground in the Los Angeles area, as long as the soil is well drained. They do tend to grow slower than some other cacti of similar size.

Copiapoa are easily propagated from cuttings or division of clumps. Seed is available from the CSSA seed bank, and most cactus seed nurseries. These seeds germinate quickly in the spring. They should be started in a moist potting mix and moved to drier media after germination. They do very well in a mineral potting mix with almost no organic matter.



Copiapoa hypogaea

Kyle Williams
Photo Credits: Kyle Williams

November 2025 Succulent of the Month - Aloe

Aloe-Kyle Williams

Photo Credits: Kyle Williams



Aloe x 'Bee's Pink'

Aloe is one of the most popular genera of succulents, especially in Southern California. In fact, *Aloe vera* may be the most widely cultivated succulent in the world, owing to its medicinal properties. Most species are small herbs to shrubs, though some species (most notably *A. dichotoma* and *A. barberae*) can reach tree size. With over 500 species, and at least as many hybrids and cultivars, there is an *Aloe* for almost any situation and taste.

Aloe species are native to most of the drier parts of Africa, including Madagascar, with a number reaching the Arabian Peninsula. They are naturalized in every Mediterranean environment in the world, as well as some temperate and tropical regions. All but a few Aloes will grow readily in Southern California, either in the ground, or in pots. When in

the ground they require minimal care, existing happily on only natural rainfall in most years. Summer growing species will appreciate some summer water. The sheer number of species and habitats make blanket statements on culture impossible, but most will thrive under the general care you give other succulents, so long as you know if you have a summer or winter grower.

Aloe combines interesting form and foliage with beautiful flowers. Most species have orange, yellow, or red flowers that are attractive to Sunbirds in their native Africa. In the Americas Hummingbirds regularly visit them. These birds are great at pollinating flowers, and it isn't unusual to see fruit develop. Those looking for other colors can find species with white or even green flowers. Some species, such as *A. tomentosa*, even have hairy flowers!

Given that *Aloe* is such a large and diverse genus it may not surprise you that modern taxonomic studies are showing that some *Aloe* species are best split off into distinct (but still related) smaller genera. The reason for this isn't just to make life more difficult for you! A genus should contain only species that are more closely related to each other than any are to species outside the genus. When we find out that some species in a genus are more closely related to species outside the genus taxonomists have two choices. Either you combine everything into one big genus, or you split the problematic species out of the genus. DNA research has shown that if we want to keep all the species we currently think of as *Aloe* in the genus *Aloe* then we have to put a bunch of other species in the genus as well. That doesn't just mean a couple obscure species no one has ever heard of. Instead, it would require putting all of *Haworthia* and *Gasteria* (among others) into *Aloe* itself.



Aloe erinacea



Aloe suprafoliata

If you want to keep *Haworthia* and *Gasteria* as their own genera (though they have their own issues we won't discuss here) then you have to be willing to split out a few Aloes from *Aloe*. Thankfully the vast majority of traditional *Aloe* species are still in *Aloe* and less than 20 species have to be removed from the genus. The most notable segregate genus is *Aloidendron* which are easy to recognize as they constitute 6 tree or shrub species including *A. barbarae*, *A. dichotomum*, & *A. ramosissimum*.

The largest segregate genus with 10 species is *Aloiampelos*, which tends to be shrubby or climbing species. The third genus *Kumara* was created for the well-

known *Aloe plicatilis* (now *Kumara plicatilis*) and one other similar species. For the sake of our Plant of the Month show you can submit plants from all four "Aloe" genera: *Aloe*, *Aloiampelos*, *Aloidendron*, and *Kumara*.

**CONEJO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
PLANT OF THE MONTH
October 2025**

Cactus - Variegates

Novice:

No Entries

Intermediate:

1st	<i>Ferocactus</i> sp. variegated	Glen & Pam Smith
2nd	<i>Myrtillocactus geometrizans</i> monstrose/variegata	Glen & Pam Smith
3rd	<i>Opuntia</i> sp. variegated	Jonathan Zhu

Advanced:

2nd	<i>Ferocactus</i> sp. variegated	Linda Holub
-----	----------------------------------	-------------

Succulents - Variegates

Novice:

1st	<i>Aloe arborescens</i> variegated	Debbie Doolittle
2nd	<i>Portulacaria afra</i> variegated	Mick Gottschall
3rd	<i>Ceropegia fusca</i> variegated	Mick Gottschall

Intermediate:

1st	<i>Aeonium</i> 'Starburst'	Lisa Gailey
2nd	<i>Euphorbia meloformis</i> ssp. <i>vilda</i> variegata	Glen & Pam Smith
3rd	<i>Aloe nobilis</i> variegated	Lisa Gailey

Advanced:

1st	<i>Euphorbia</i> sp. variegated/crest	Linda Holub
2nd	<i>Portulacaria afra</i> variegated	Ann Hopkinson
3rd	<i>Haworthia limifolia</i> variegated	Susan Krevitt

For the October 2025 plant of the month mini show we had 6 Novice, 7 Intermediate, and 12 Advanced entries for a total of 25 plants. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to all that participated

POM is one of the educational segments of our club meetings. The POM mini show allows the membership to become better acquainted with the different succulent plant genera and how to effectively care for and stage them. Get involved and enter your plants. This is your show.

September 2025 POM WINNERS Succulent - Variegates



Mick Gottschalk
3rd Place Novice
Ceropegia fusca variegated



Mick Gottschalk
2nd Place Novice
Portulacaria afra variegated



Debbie Doolittle
1st Place Novice
Aloe arborescens variegated



Lisa Gailey
3rd Place Intermediate
Aloe nobilis variegated



Glen & Pam Smith
2nd Place Intermediate
Euphorbia meloformus ssp. *vilda* variegata



Lisa Gailey
1st Place Intermediate
Aeonium 'Starburst'



Susan Krevitt
3rd Place Advanced
Haworthia limifolia variegated



Ann Hopkinson
2nd Place Advanced
Portulacaria afra
variegated



Linda Holub
1st Place Advanced
Euphorbia sp. variegated

September 2025 POM WINNERS Cactus - Variegates



Johnathan Zhu
3rd Place Intermediate
Opuntia sp. variegated



Glen & Pam Smith
2nd Place Intermediate
Myrtillocactus geometrizans
monstrose/variegated



Glen & Pam Smith
1st Place Intermediate
Ferocactus sp. variegated



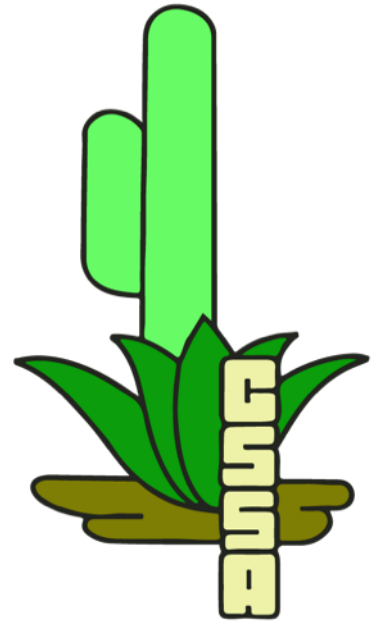
Linda Holub
2nd Place Advanced
Ferocactus sp. variegated

CSSA Conservation Grants

Learn about how CSSA uses your Conservation Contributions

CSSA ADMIN 2025-08-01 CONSERVATION, CONSERVATION
PROJECT REPORTS

The Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc. (CSSA) is proud to share the outcomes of our Conservation Committee's grants awarded from 2022 through mid-2025. These projects represent our commitment to protecting succulent habitats and plant biodiversity worldwide. Thanks to your continued support, we've contributed over \$36,000 to innovative conservation work in South Africa, Namibia, Peru, Chile, Mexico, and the United States – with more to come ...



Conservation Projects Funded in 2025

Total expenditure through 07/31/2025 is \$6,000

Preserving Habitat of *Lithops pseudotruncatella* f. *alpina* in Namibia

Funds are supporting the purchase of critical habitat at one of only two known sites for this distinctive, potentially new species (*Lithops alpina*). This effort is a collaboration with the Namibian Chamber of Environment and the National Botanical Research Institute.

Conservation Projects Funded in 2024

Total expenditure for 2024 was \$14,877

Karoo Desert Botanical Garden – South Africa

The funds awarded to Karoo Desert Botanical Garden helped upgrade a tunnel house to care for confiscated plants.

National Botanical Garden of Namibia

This grant supported upgrades to their shade house and funded an intern to care for the collection.

Cape Nature Interagency Conference – South Africa

With this grant, CSSA helped bring together agencies to coordinate plant poaching enforcement efforts. Co-sponsored with TRAFFIC.

Echeveria laui Climate Impact Study – Mexico

CSSA funded drone-based surveys in steep canyons to assess the impact of climate change and evaluate drone efficacy in remote monitoring.

For further information visit Cactus and Succulent Society of America.

<https://cactusandsucculentsociety.org/2025/08/01/cssa-conservation-grants>