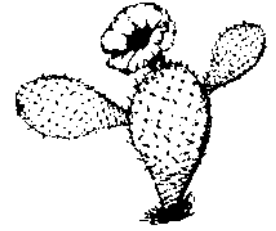




*Agave desmettiana*  
'variegata'

BJH

# The Cactus Patch



*Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei*

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Volume 22 **January 2019** Number 01

This Month's Program

**Keith Taylor**

**"Staging Succulents, part 2"**

January 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00

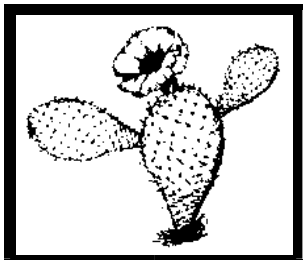
**St. Paul's Church, 2216 17<sup>th</sup> St.**

**Huntington  
Garden  
FREE**

**Desert Forum  
Sat. Jan. 19th**

**Meet the  
Speaker!**

Dinner at  
Sizzler  
5:00 PM  
**900 Real Road**



# The Cactus Patch

## Volume 22 Number 01

### January 2019

The Cactus Patch is the official publication of the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society of Bakersfield, California



Membership in the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society costs \$20 per year for an individual and \$25 a year for a family.

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~2~

## January 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting

### Keith Taylor, "Staging Succulents, part 2"



Keith Taylor will discuss winter grower succulents, talking about care, exposures, extremes and staging for presentation. Most think winter are an off season when it comes to C&S and by expanding your knowledge of these plants will encourage you to grow something of interest year round. Keith will also bring in specimens from his collection to share, as well as have pottery available for purchase.

Keith Taylor began collecting caudiciform succulents in 1991 after seeing a large *Cyphostemma juttae* in the ground at a local botanical garden. "I was drawn to size and grotesque

shape of the trunk". The *Cyphostemma* he saw is also the 1st succulent he purchased. His collection is more than 800 plants. He grows in plastic pots and raised beds. Keith prefers his succulents to look like habitat specimens rather than cultivated plants. He grows them hard, meaning limited water, little to no feeding and hot sun to give them the look of collected plants.

In 2008, Keith began creating pots to show off his plants. He believes the pot should compliment, not distract. The main focus should be the succulent. If the pot is too ornate, colorful, or shiny, it draws your eye toward the pot rather than the succulent. Also proportion plays a roll. Rocks and topdressing add to complete the presentation. His pottery is sought after by C&S collectors as well as bonsai artists.

Keith sells his work at C&S clubs and shows, bonsai clubs, online through Facebook, Instagram, and his website. He accepts custom orders and ships worldwide.

Website <http://potterybykitoi.weebly.com/>

~3~

# January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019

## "Winter Family Potluck"

Food, Fellowship, and Fun  
(auction plants, too!)



## The Succulent Garden at Cal State

### *Crassula connata*



You may not know it, but even before we planted the first succulent at the Cal State Garden there was already a native one growing there. In fact, you may have it in your garden right now.

It is Pygmy-Weed, *Crassula connata*.

This is a miniature succulent with leaves struggling to reach longer than 2 millimeters. The whole plant can reach over an inch long – sometimes longer under good conditions. Unlike most of the succulents we are familiar with, this one is an annual, a winter grower in our area dying as soon as it warms up and dries



out. Here in the Valley it sprouts with the winter rains, especially if the following fog keeps the ground moist. It is not hard to find as it can colonize large areas of bare ground coating it with what at first looks like moss. I have grown it in pots where it gets

quite long and gangly. Not a show-stopper, but a neat miniature curiosity.

Stephen Cooley

# Plant of the Month

## *Crassula ovata*



At the December silent auction I bid on and won a book, Succulent Plants of the World by Fred Dortort. I have been reading in it and find the

information and organization very useful and interesting. I have decided to use it as a source for the next several articles on the plant of the month. The book has a few introductory chapters that cover general information about what a succulent is as well as how to grow and propagate them then it begins a systematic series of chapters on the different genera. It is my plan to follow that method and discuss representative members of different genera in sequence. This month it is the genus Crassula.

Probably the most common succulent that we all have at least one of is the Jade Plant, Crassula ovata. Although it is native to South Africa it is so common in California that it is becoming naturalized in the south coastal bioregion from Monterey to the Mexican border and on into Baja California in areas free of frost.

One of the facts I learned in my reading is that one of the characteristics shared by members of the genus is the presence of “hydathodes” in the leaves. These are special pores that are used to rid the plant of excess water if growing in a damp environment but in the succulent members of the genus they will take up water in a dry environment. Something very useful in a “fog desert” such one finds along the South African coast.

Crassula ovata is a shrub with erect stems that grows to a height of about 2 ft. (65 cm.). Stems are covered with a thin silvery bark. Trunks may reach a thickness of 8 in. (20 cm.). Leaves are ovate, bright green but tinged with red when exposed to strong light. They are 0.75-2.5 in. (20-70 mm.) long depending on light and moisture conditions. Flowers are in panicles. Individual flowers are about 0.5 in. (12 mm.) across with five petals, white tinged with pink. Flowers are produced from Dec. to Feb. in this hemisphere.

Many people grow them in Bakersfield but our occasional frosts will sometimes kill the tops back. Some protection is required such as a blanket or moving a potted specimen into a



warmer place like a garage or even the house. Well drained gritty soil is preferred. They should not be watered during winter months. A good way to know when to water is to gently squeeze a leaf. If it gives as much as an earlobe it is time to water.

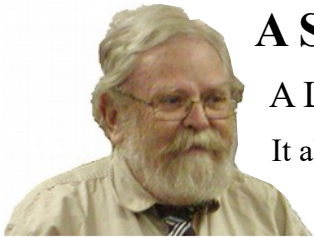
Jack G. Reynolds

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## A Sparking Thanksgiving

### A Letter From Bruce

It all started with my grandfather's plant of *Agave americana*. When I was growing up in Stockton it bloomed and my grandfather took daily pictures of the fast growing flower stalk. They were published in the Stockton Record and I was impressed. When we moved I took a shoot with me. I still have plants from that original clone, in fact the one in the garden at our house in Bakersfield is the third "generation" here. (The previous two bloomed and died as Agaves do.)

I cleared out some of our lawn and began planting more species. I have about 50 now, but I'm not sure what some of them are, so I was thrilled to get the book Agaves of Continental North America by Howard Scott Gentry at the club Christmas auction this year. I was interested to learn that the first species named (by Linnaeus) was *Agave americana*! It was a bit discouraging to read, however, that "Bafflement among botanists in understanding the species in *Agave* continues to the present..." Part of the problem is that they reproduce by suckers, by bulblets on the flower stalk and by seed. Another problem is that a lot of them (like *Agave americana*) were described from plants cultivated in Europe. These do not resemble the wild ones! Finally, it is difficult to preserve a specimen of *Agave*, so there are few in herbarium collections.

Another example is *Agave desmettiana*. Jacobi originally described it as three species because of the variability. I have one which is in bud right now and I checked the leaves. On the same plant I find leaves with no teeth, teeth on half the length of the leaf and others with teeth the full length! But enough on Agaves.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of November we went to Fresno and on the 21<sup>st</sup> continued on to Sparks, Nevada where our grand kids now live. There was just a flurry of snow at Donner Summit.



~8~



On Thanksgiving we gorged ourselves and watched the Macy's parade. Next day we took a family picture, watched the kids play in piles of leaves and walked around the huge Legends shopping center next to where our son James and his family now live.

On Saturday we went to the Fleishman Planetarium at the University of Nevada in Reno with Matthew's Cub Scout pack and watched a great show with animated Greek gods (though not quite up to Disney).



Outside, Polly was impressed with a sundial that could be adjusted for daylight saving time! We then had lunch at Archie's which claims to have the best hamburgers in Nevada. (They were good, but I think Calif. has better ones.)

That evening we went back to Legends Shopping Mall and watched the Christmas tree lighting and fireworks.



~9~



Then we went inside Scheel's sporting outfitters (it was good to get in out of the cold) and Polly and James took the kids on the giant indoor Ferris wheel there. On Sunday we returned via 395 to avoid traffic, stopping at Katie's Kitchen in Carson City for Breakfast and Nicely's in Lee Vining for lunch. An exhausting trip..

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of Dec. we saw "Bohemian Rhapsody" at the Edwards and then watched the lighting of a

giant menorah for the start of Chanukah.



On the 6<sup>th</sup> of Dec we went to Fresno for the FCSS pot luck dinner. The silent auction was good (lots of old books), but the bids were too high for me. On the 9<sup>th</sup> we saw my sister Lora as the wicked stepmother in a Christmas(?) play of Cinderella at the Parkside Church. And on the 11<sup>th</sup> we were at the BCSS potluck. Too much Christmas already.

**Bruce Hargreaves**

[Bruce's opinions are his own and are not necessarily that of the BCSS]



**January 8<sup>th</sup> BCSS Meeting**  
Keith Taylor, "Staging Succulents, part 2"

**January 19<sup>h</sup> Desert Forum**  
FREE early admission: see flyer  
Huntington Botanical Garden

**February 12<sup>th</sup> BCSS Meeting**  
Mark Muradian, "Building an Outdoor C & S Garden"

**March 12<sup>th</sup> BCSS Meeting**  
Woody Minnich presentation debut,  
"20 Years in the ATACAMA, The Land of the Copiapoa"

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## DESERT FORUM

Saturday, 19 January

### SCHEDULE

9:00 – 9:45 **Registration** Please bring your CSSA or affiliated club badge or membership card for admission. In order to receive free admission, you must arrive by 9:45. Late arrivers will need to pay for Huntington admission.

9:00 – 10:00 **Coffee** and doughnuts will be available in the lower section of the Desert Garden

9:00 – 11:00 **Desert Garden** • Knowledgeable staff and docents will be stationed throughout the Desert Garden and Desert Conservatory • Aloes will be flowering

11:00 – 1:00 **Plant Sales** – (exclusively for CSSA and club members) Gate opens by the Teaching Greenhouse at 11:00 for plant sales - please, no early bird shopping, and no shopping after 1:00. Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted

1:00 – 5:00 **Free Time** Participants are welcome to tour the gardens and galleries from 10:00 to 5:00.

### **Lunch:**

- Café 1919 in the visitor center features a variety of sandwiches, salads, and grilled items
- The tea room at Liu Fang Yuan is a nice option for Asian food
- Red Car (coffee shop), located near the Store, offers a small selection of pre-made options