



ON THE DRY SIDE

The meeting will take place on **October 11**.

Our Guest Speaker is Dr. Robert H. Webb and his topic is Sansevierias.

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October Zoom Meeting Invitations

Invitations for the October CCCSS meeting will be emailed to everyone on the newsletter mailing list. No need to request an invitation. You should receive your invitation in a separate email soon after you receive your newsletter.

"Rethinking the Genus Sansevieria"

Dr. Robert H. Webb is a retired hydrologist from the U.S. Geological Survey. He has been growing succulent plants and cacti for nearly 40 years, conducted research on plant ecology and conservation biology in the southwestern United States for nearly as long, and for the last 15 years has travelled extensively in Africa and the Arabian Peninsula looking for succulent plants. He and his wife are the owners of Arid Lands Greenhouses in Tucson, Arizona, and Webb is the chairman of the International Sansevieria Society. He has described and named 10 species or subspecies of plants, including 2 Agave species from Baja California, Mexico, and 8 Sansevieria species or subspecies from East Africa.

Dr. Webb will talk about the genus Sansevieria, including an overview of the genus and its extreme diversity of form and growth rates, as well as discuss a number of new species that have recently been described.



PLANT OF THE MONTH: SEDUM

Photos courtesy of Rob Skillin.
Adapted from Dennis Carey, Plant Delights Nursery, Inc.

Sedum (Stonecrop) is an easy to grow group of succulents that look great in the Summer and Fall garden. The genus Sedum is a diverse group that includes **upright tall sedums, mat-forming carpet sedums, insanely drought tolerant sedums and sedums that need to drink regularly, sun loving sedums and woodland garden sedums**. So it is important to know your sedum before you plant. Some taxonomists have moved the tall sedums into the genus Hylotelephium, but tall or short, we still call 'em sedum.

For the garden there are two main groups of sedums, tall and creeping sedums. The tall sedums (mainly *Sedum spectabile*, *S. telephium*) have upright stems that grow from 1 to 3 feet tall depending on variety and conditions. New cultivars of tall sedums have been bred to be shorter which means they are less floppy and in better proportion to today's smaller gardens. The stems of tall sedum are clothed in fleshy succulent leaves along their length and are topped in Summer or Fall with colorful flower clusters. Tall sedums have been traditionally grown for their symmetrical form and colorful flowers but newer varieties of tall sedum also feature colorful leaves in shades of copper, dusky mauve and dark purple.

The creeping sedums (like *S. ternatum*, *S. tectorum* and many others) are a wildly variable group with long narrow stems that grow along the ground and form mats of colorful fleshy foliage. Traditionally, creeping sedums are grown for their colorful foliage (blue, yellow, copper, marron [brown] and more) or for their draping form which softens the edge of containers and the rock walls that they have been tucked into. Although not specifically grown for flowers, creeping sedums do produce attractive but short sprays of flowers.

There are also a few stonecrop plants that are intermediate between tall and creeping sedums (e.g., *S. ussuriense*) but these are fairly rare in the trade.



Senecio petraeus aka *jacobensii*.

Senecio petraeus aka *jacobensii* flower



Senecio corymbiferus

PLANT OF THE MONTH —Continued

Tall sedums like Autumn Joy, Frosted Fire, and Dynomite are fairly drought tolerant but you will get the largest, most floriferous plants with regular (weekly) water while the plant is actively growing (Spring to Fall). In very dry conditions, the tall sedums will grow much more slowly, not fill out and branch as much, and may even get spindly.

The best stonecrops for super dry conditions are certain creeping sedums (e.g., *S. tetractinum*, *S. scre*, *S. album*, *S. kamshaticum* and many others). Be careful when selecting a creeping sedum for a dry site because some creeping sedums (e.g., *S. ternatum*) do not tolerate drought. Once the active growing



Senecio sp



Senecio sulcicalyx

Sedums generally prefer lean conditions so go easy on the fertilizer. An organic compost applied is best. Chemical fertilizer can lead to stretching and flopping.



Senecio tropaeolifolius

season is over during Winter, our Mediterranean climate should provide enough rainfall to keep them healthy as long as the soil drains very well. If you are not sure whether it is time to water a stonecrop err on the dry side...when in doubt, give it drought.

No matter what type of stonecrop plant you buy you should plant it in well drained soil. Heavy wet soil is sure to rot both tall and creeping sedums alike. Their fondness for well-drained soil makes sedum plants great for raised beds, hillside slopes, sandy soil, rock gardens, crevice gardens, containers and green roofs.

Creeping sedums generally do not need to be pruned unless they grow out of bounds. Tall sedums can be tip pruned in Spring to control the height but this will delay the onset of flowering. Tall sedums die back to a ground-level rosette in the Winter.

Both tall and creeping sedums are excellent container plants provided that you use a decent potting mix that both retains water and drains well. Tall sedums look great in a patio container and creeping sedums are excellent spiller companions to tall container plants. Creeping sedums also look great tucked into the

nooks and crannies of strawberry pots, pallet gardens, rock walls and wall gardens and creeping sedums are perfect for hanging baskets too as their long stems drape down over the edge of the pot.

PLANT OF THE MONTH —Continued



Senecio stapeliiformis

The low water requirements and spreading nature of creeping sedums make them perfect plants for wall gardens, crevice gardens and roof top gardens. Stonecrop is the go-to plant for roof gardens on industrial buildings like the 10.4 acre Ford truck plant in Dearborn Michigan or the 32,000 sq ft. Toronto City Hall. And in Europe there are literally millions of square feet of green roofs covered mostly with stonecrop plants. Most of these gardens are not irrigated and the sedum thrives only on rainfall.

Tall sedum cultivars like Autumn Joy are renowned for their wonderful fall flower show. When much of the garden is winding down, the Fall sedums are peaking. Tall sedums produce excellent cut flowers. Once most of the florets are open, cut the stem, strip some of the leaves at the bottom and enjoy. Tall sedum cut flowers also dry well. The creeping sedums can also shine in winter as some, like Sedum tetractinum have leaves that turn red or purple in the winter.

Creeping sedums are ridiculously easy to propagate. Pull up or cut some of the stems and lay them on top of some potting soil or stick them shallowly into the potting soil. Large clumps of tall sedums can be propagated via division or via stem cuttings too. Sedum stem cuttings should be 3 to 5 inches long and the leaves should be stripped from the bottom inch or so before being stuck into soil.



Request:

Does anyone anyone have *Aloe striata* seeds?



Thanks, Mary Peracca

British Cactus and Succulent Society Webinars

By Kathie Matsuyama

One of the revelations during this pandemic has been the phenomenal ability to connect cactus and succulent lovers around the world through Zoom webinars. The British Cactus and Succulent Society is doing just that--- offering a great series of Zoom webinars featuring a line-up of speakers to educate and entertain on a wide-ranging list of cactus and succulent topics appropriate for everyone from beginners to the more experienced. Members and non-members of the BCCS are welcome to participate with almost 300 people currently attending (they have space for up to 500). The talks are scheduled to last about an hour. They take place every Tuesday at 7:30 pm BST (British Summer Time) which is 11:30 am Pacific Daylight Time (California's current time zone). For more information, and a list of upcoming speakers, please check the British Cactus and Succulent Society website at www.society.bcss.org.uk

Recap of the talk we had last month by Jeff Moore

What a great speaker we had on our most recent meeting (September 13th). Jeff Moore (Owner of Solana Succulents in Solana Beach, CA) discussed and showed great photos of ways to use plants in our landscapes. He talked about various ways to landscape as well as plants to use. He encouraged the use of non-succulent plants with similar water requirements to add for interest, filler and color. Some of the plants he mentioned were plants in the Bromeliad family. This can bring a bit of tropical feel to a succulent garden. He mentioned a couple of Bromeliads who are brightly colored and have low water requirements. (*Aechmea blanchetiana* and *Neoregelia hallelujah*)

He shared some really good points such as the three R's. Rocks (big and small), repetition (of plant material) and restraint (don't overdo it with plants, consider the size of the plants when grown).

He suggested watering a new, freshly planted succulent landscape on a regular basis (once every other week or so) until it is established.

He suggested a few steps for a successful succulent landscape success.

1. Start with a blank slate. Remove all the old landscape.
2. Bring in good draining soil and build into mounds (helps drainage)
3. Bring in rocks large and small.
4. Start planting the larger plants toward the back of the landscape and work your way down in plant size toward the front. Consider what size the plant will be after a while in the landscape. His example was sticks of fire that can grow like crazy.
5. Use plant repetition (groupings of the same plants) to bring continuity to the garden.
6. Use ground cover plants in the foreground.
7. Blank spaces (areas without plants) can be created with rocks, boulders and possibly large or broken pots. These blank spaces create interest in the landscape.
8. Bring in non-succulents that have similar water requirements.

Some of the photos he shared can be found in one of his four beautiful books. These books are well written with amazing photos of our favorite plants! His books can be purchased through his website www.solanasucculents.com



Don't miss out on our next Zoom meeting with Bob Webb on Sansevierias , mark your calendar for October 11th at 2pm.

A Word From Our Former Club President Mary Peracca

Here is my background story as I related at the September meeting.

I became interested in tropical plants (house plants) while I was at Cal Poly. There were few places to buy them then. So when I graduated and couldn't find a teaching job, my husband and I opened a plant shop, The Greenery. We sold tropical plants, bromeliads and some succulents. 7 years later, we split up and I sold my share of the business to my ex.

I kept growing plants as I eventually received my master's degree in Clinical Psychology from Antioch University in Santa Barbara. I worked for 10 years at County Drug and Alcohol Services doing individual and group counseling.

I worked at Cal Poly's Counseling Services for 12 years as the alcohol and drug specialist.

During that time I saw an ad in The Tribune for the Cactus and Succulent Society and went to my first meeting. I had found my plant people! So began my succulent collecting (perhaps some level of hoarding!) That was probably 14 years ago!

I went to some Board meetings to get more involved. When they said they needed a secretary and president, they all looked at me. I said I would rather be president than secretary! So that's how I came to be president! Later, I also served as vice president.

I enjoyed being a part of plans and decisions as our club kept growing.

I bought pots from Charles Varni, Richard Rowe, Maggie Wagner and Ben Trogden. As I was planning to retire my 2 goals were to hike more and learn how to make planters for my now massive collection.

I was very fortunate that Charles Varni offered to teach me slab built pottery and has been supportive from my first pieces to my current work. I found I was passionate about ceramics and creating new textures and designs. I kept making pots, lots of pots and then began selling them. I know many of you have my planters and I appreciate your support and enjoy hearing about what you like about them. I also get to keep making more which I love to do!

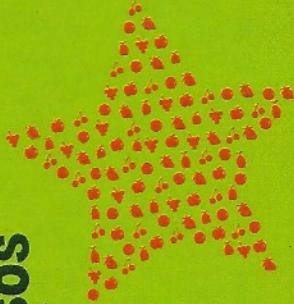
I used to do most of my work at the Cal Poly Craft Center but it's been closed since March. Fortunately I have a small studio and a kiln at home so I have been able to keep making pots.

I missed you all at our usual show and sale this year but I am having a sale Saturday, October 10th from 10:00- 2:00 in my backyard. Linda Drake will be selling succulents and I will have my pottery. See the flyer in this newsletter for more information. I hope to see many of you then!

Mary

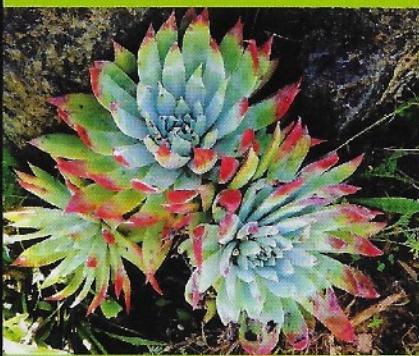
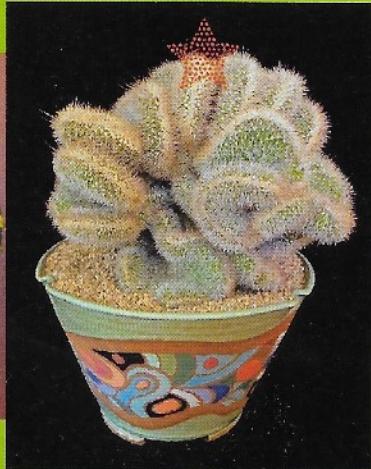
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*Not sure? Check #wegrowslo or give us a call!!!
HEAVY rain cancels.*

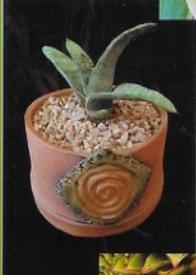
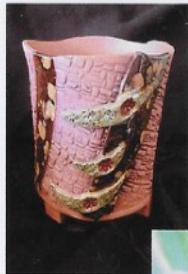
ANNOUNCEMENTS—Continued



MEMBERSHIP DUES NEWS

Dues for the membership year 2020/21 are payable now, by mail. Nobody will be dropped from the rolls until our next in-person membership meeting, by which time you must have paid your dues. It would be very helpful to the club to pay your dues now, as we have ongoing expenses even though we are not meeting in person. Please pay by check, made payable to CCCSS. Dues are as follows: Individual - \$20; Family, all under same roof - \$25; Business, \$40. Please mail your dues c/o Terry Skillin, 8910 Camino Cielo, Arroyo Grande, CA 93420.

Please take a moment to renew your dues today. A membership application is not needed unless there are changes to your current membership status or you are a new member. Applications can be found online at
<https://centralcoastcactus.org/home/membership-information/>



Succulent Plants & Pottery Sale **Saturday October 10th 10am-4pm**

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## ADENIUM ADVICE

Hi Rob,

My adenium isn't doing well. It's not sprouting leaves, the leaves will get brown edges and it hasn't flowered this season. At first I had it in the sun and I thought it was getting burnt. I now have it by the front door so gets indirect light.

Any idea what's going on?

Thanks....

Kathy

Kathy,

Adeniums like bright light and warmth, but you would run the risk of scorching the caudex in full sun. They are also heavy water users when in growth, and will start dropping their leaves quickly if kept too dry. The older leaves also are constantly dying and dropping off as new leaves are produced at the stem tips. There is always a pile of dead leaves around the base of my plants, even when in full growth.

Your plant is putting out a lot of new leaves, which shows it wants to grow. I suggest moving it to a bright location, which will help it flower. Don't be afraid to give it plenty of water - don't let it get totally dry until it wants to go dormant in the late fall when days are shorter and colder. Actually, my Adenium arabicum don't ever go dormant in my unheated greenhouse, and I water them all year round (less in winter of course).

Your plant looks fine to me, it just wants more light and water.

Rob



## BRAG PLANTS FROM OUR MEMBERS



*Gymnocalycium  
horstii*



*Sansevieria  
patens*



*Hoya multiflora*



Cane Cholla

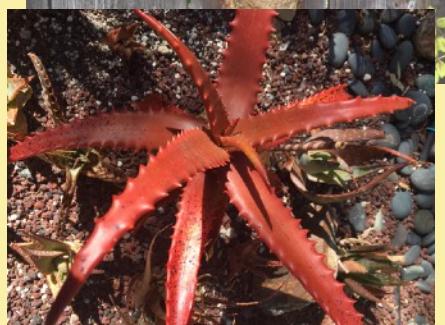


*Hoya cumingiana* *Lobilia aurea v. quinquesensis*



..from Carol Mortensen

## BRAG PLANTS FROM OUR MEMBERS—Continued



..from M'lou Mayo

## BRAG PLANTS FROM OUR MEMBERS—

I listen to the CSSA webinar last Saturday. Really very interesting to learn why Plants mutate, crest and become Monstrose. After having viewed his slides, I realized I have a lot of these. I didn't know that mutations came from viruses, radiation, garden pests and change of weather damaging the plant cells..

It was hard to decide what to send you because I have so many. Happy smile!!

I was surprised to learn about the mutations of pelargoniums that can be caused by a virus . I just thought it was the way they bred it. But au contraire.

.. from Leisa Swanson



## BRAG PLANTS FROM OUR MEMBERS—Continued



I have the air plants all over and around my koi Pond. They thrive. A large group of them are clinging to the trunk of a tree fern.

The colorful one is a giant Bromeliad that was given to me years ago. It had blooms that lasted for months!

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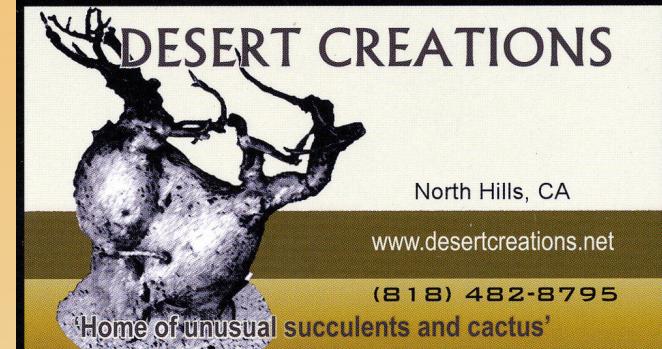
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