

# CCSS Newsletter

## Connecticut Cactus and Succulent Society

October 2011

### From the President

It seems to be hard to avoid rain for the cactus club get-togethers this summer, but precipitation was limited to a few sprinkles for the September meeting at **Andy** and **Jeanine Loya's** house in East Nassau, New York. Jeanine talked to us about her favorite cacti, *Mammillaria*, and we had a chance to tour the Loyas' beautiful and incredibly packed gardens and greenhouse, and to get acquainted with their menagerie of dogs, rabbits, and horses. I have no idea how they find time to keep up with it all.

● We are steadily making progress on the arrangements for the Eastern Cactus and Succulent Conference in April 2012. The registration form and hotel arrangements are set, and promotional material has been sent to every

cactus and succulent society in the East, and a few in adjacent Canada, as well as to the national cactus and succulent society for inclusion in their newsletter.

● Our speaker lineup is mostly set, although **Gwen Moore** will, unfortunately, not be able to attend as originally planned. More information is on the club website, including a list of committees, in case you are able to volunteer some time to help out during the convention.

● This month, the Connecticut Cactus and Succulent Society has an opportunity to promote the hobby at the Connecticut Orchid Society Show, at **Van Wilgen's Garden Center** in North Branford. We will have a table there and need people to promote the club and bring in a few plants to show off for October 21, 22 and 23. There are a few volunteers already, but we need more: contact **David Schultz** ([dmschultzcactus@yahoo.com](mailto:dmschultzcactus@yahoo.com)) if you can help.

● This month's meeting will be hosted by **Judy Becker** of Lauray of Salisbury. Judy will give a talk on *Euphorbia*. Early October is always a beautiful time for a road trip to the northwest hills, and I wish that I could be there, but be-



### The Secretary's Report

Sixteen people made it up to **Loyas'** to see their many plants, their dogs, and four of the six horses Jeanine takes care of. It turned out to be a lovely day for conversation, eating, admiring the plants that were everywhere, and having a pleasant ride up and back. The Loyas provided a covered pavilion we could all fit into, to protect us from short bursts of rain.

● After lunch and another look around, our president **Matt Opel** started the business meeting. He brought us up-to-date on plans for next year's conference. Job descriptions for committees are online—a few leader positions are still open. We tabled a decision for rates for our member workers to go to lectures and other Conference activities.

● There are quite a few opportunities to go to events sponsored by other groups and Societies. The Orchid Society has offered us the chance to have a booth at their show, Oct. 21–23, at Wilgen's Nursery in North Branford.

**David** and **Barbara Schultz** will go down Friday, taking the poster, some flyers and a plant. **John Spain** and **Becky** will go down Saturday taking plants and bringing them back. We need people to tend the booth and answer questions on all days especially Sunday. Tell them you are handling the booth so that you can get in free.

● The Carnivorous Plant Society of New England is having their show during the first weekend of October at Roger Williams Park in Providence, Rhode Island. The Hartford Flower Show is February 23–26. We will have a booth there as usual. We need plants at our booth, and in their show, and we need workers to answer questions, remind people of our change of venue in April, and pass out flyers and membership applications.

● As a last bit of information, Matt said he had gotten a message that Joanna of Cortland, New York had a large cactus to be adopted. Anyone up that way interested?

Respectfully submitted,  
Becky Lynn  
Secretary

Continued on page 2, left column

### From the President, *continued from page 1*

cause of other commitments I will be absent and leave Vice President **Jeanine Loya** in charge.

● **Fred Kattermann** will present a slide show on the cacti and succulents of Mexico in November, at our usual location in the UConn Storrs Life Sciences Building. In December, we are heading to New Haven and Yale's **Marsh Botanical Garden**, for the annual holiday party. After that, there will only be two more regular monthly meetings before the big conference!

Thank you,  
Matt Opel  
President



## Upcoming Events

**Sunday, October 2** : The October meeting will take place at Lauray of Salisbury at Salisbury, Connecticut. Judy Becker will give a talk on *Euphorbia*. [A map and directions are on page 4.]

**1:00 PM**

**Bring Chairs**

**Entrées: T-Z**

**Appetizers/Sides/Salads: A-G**

**Desserts: H-S**

**Sunday, November 6**: At the November meeting, Fred Kattermann will present a slide show on the cacti and succulents of Mexico. We will meet at the UConn Storrs Life Sciences Building.

**Sundy, December 4**: Our December meeting will be held at Yale's Marsh Botanical Garden in New Haven, Connecticut.

## The Connecticut Cactus and Succulent Society

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The CCSS Newsletter is published each month except January. Annual membership of \$12.00 includes subscription to the newsletter. This membership includes all members of an immediate family residing at the same residence. Payment is payable to the Treasurer, Mr. Ken Mosher, 8 Bailey Road, Andover, CT 06232.

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## Treasurer's Report

Income:	
Book Sales	\$125.65
Conference Seed Money	100.00
Dues	12.00
Expenses:	
September Newsletter	167.85
Copies for Conference Publicity	57.40
Book Purchases	40.00
Total Income (Expense)	\$ (27.60)
<b>Bank Balance</b>	<b>\$11,698.88</b>

# Succulents of Coastal Southern California

By Matt Opel, PhD

*This is the second and last article on Succulents of Coastal Southern California. The first appeared on page two in the August edition of the newsletter.*

**A**part from the Crassulaceae (stonecrop family), the Cactaceae (cactus family) is probably the group of succulent plants that is most prominent in the flora of the San Diego area. The most frequently encountered



*Ferocactus viridescens* var. *viridescens* at *Torrey Pines State Reserve*.

Photo by Matt Opel, PhD

cacti are *Opuntia* and *Cylindropuntia* species, the prickly pears and chollas. There are several species of each genus in the area, ready to stick unwary hikers with barbed spines and glochids. Some, like *Opuntia littoralis*, form impressive spiky clumps.

● *Ferocactus viridescens* looks a little out of place in the chaparral of the coastal regions; the genus is much more widespread in true desert, inland. This small barrel cactus grows mostly on open gravelly slopes, though I spotted a few plants under the scrubby vegetation that dominates the area. *Ferocactus viridescens* seems to be relatively rare, and getting more so: a botanist told me about a large population in downtown San Diego that persisted for many years on a steep slope amid the parking lots and hotel complexes, which was just recently wiped out by development.

● The cactus genera *Mammillaria* and *Bergerocactus* are also represented in coastal SoCal, though I have never spotted them in the wild. The local climate is almost entirely winter-rainfall, and I wonder if the native cacti are



*Yucca schidigera* at *Torrey Pines*.

Photo by Matt Opel, PhD

winter-growing? I suspect that they would do most of their growing in the warmer months if cultivated in a greenhouse in the Northeast, but it would be worth experimenting with keeping them active in the winter.

● *Yucca* and related genera *Hesperoyucca* and *Agave* (family Agavaceae) are also encountered in the patchy remnants of the wilds of greater San Diego. *Yucca schidigera*, Spanish Dagger, is widespread in the Sonoran and Mohave deserts, as well as the chaparral. It branches from the base



*The alien Carpobrotus edulis*, in *Vista, California*.

Photo by Matt Opel, PhD

Continued on page 4

### Scucculents of California, continued from page 3

and grows into a good-sized shrub, often taller than a person.

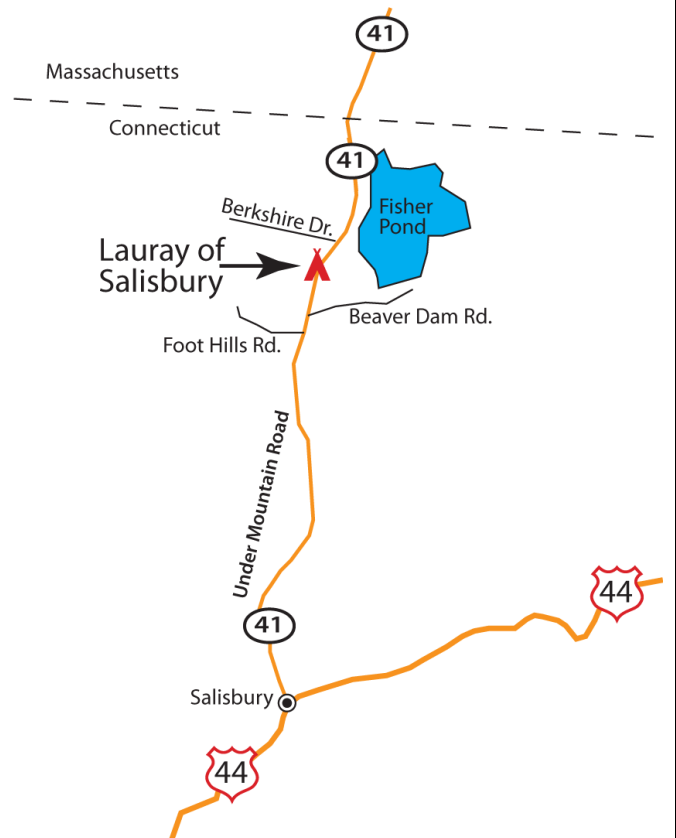
- *Marah macrocarpus*, California Manroot, is a caudiciform plant in the squash family (Cucurbitaceae). *Marah* produces scrambling, leafy vines in the winter and spring, but the interesting part of the plant, from the perspective of the succulent-plant fan, is the massive tuber. In the wild, the tuber stays unseen deep underground, but caudiciform growers can raise their Manroots partially above ground for viewing.

- Finally, the beaches and freeway medians of Southern California are host to a wide variety of ice plants (family Aizoaceae). Most of these are introduced from South Africa, but at least one species—*Carpobrotus aequilaterus* (Sour Fig)—is most likely native. Some of the exotic ice plants, including *Mesembryanthemum* and other species of



## Directions to Lauray of Salisbury

1. Salisbury is in the northwestern corner of Connecticut.
2. Get onto Route 44 west at a convenient point.
3. Lauray of Salisbury is about 3.8 miles north of Salisbury on Route 41 on the left (west) side of the road. See map below.



*Carpobrotus*, have become invasive weeds, sometimes even encountered in wild areas. ○

Dr. Matt Opel, the president of the CCSS, is the Horticulturalist at the UConn EEB Plant Growth Facilities in Storrs, Connecticut.

**Upper photo:** Jeanine Loya discusses her *Mammallaria* collection as the speaker at our September meeting. She and her husband, Andy, hosted our meeting at their home in East Nassau, New York.

**Lower photo:** A beautiful specimen of *Uebelmannia pectinifera*, a Brazilian cactus, kept out of doors during the summer at the Loyas'.

Photos by Herbert (Sully) Sullivan