

VOL. 55  
No. 6

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2018

# Kaktos Komments

*a bimonthly publication of the Houston Cactus and Succulent Society  
to promote the study of cacti and other succulents*



Painting of Saguaro  
by Mary Pinké Neck

**From the editor**

**Karla Halpaap-Wood**

I want to thank everybody who contributed to this KK.

The indexes for KK general articles, cactus and succulent of the month are updated on the website and include all of Volume 55. They can be found here: <http://www.hcsstex.org/newsletters.html>

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**Membership**

**Kathy Fewox**

At our 2018 Show & Sale, held September 8 and 9, HCSS added eleven new members. Please join me in welcoming Mike Bodkin, Walker Oliver, Christy Wild, Patricia Moreno, Madeline Droog, Art Leuterma, Portia Leyendecker, Karen Kain, Michael Stencil, Alicia Lau, and Peter Pham to our club. We also gained a returnee in Mary McConnell, who had accidentally let her membership lapse. Mary has been attending college, and night classes and homework made it impossible for her to attend HCSS meetings. She hopes a different schedule will allow her to join us more regularly.

We had two door prizes at the Show & Sale. Patricia Moreno won a beautiful Echeveria, and Rafael Sepulveda was the happy winner of a Euphorbia mili.

On September 26, twenty-four members attended the meeting. Among those was brand-new member Rafael Sepulveda, who joined at the meeting. Welcome to HCSS, Rafael! Also attending were guests Ken Warren, Michael Bryan (guest of Victoria Castillo), and Sue Ellen Richardson and her son (whose name I can't read).

Several wonderful door prizes were given away. Dave Thomas donated a Kalanchoe prolifera, which was won by July Olson. Bruce Moffett and Josie Watts donated a Kalanchoe thrisaflora, which went home with Wally Ward, and an Echinopsis, won by Richard Holland. Pinke Neck donated three nice Dorstenia foetida plants, which were claimed by Kathleen Canty, Milton Pierson, and Cindy Gray. Wally Ward brought in two collections of issues of "Cactus and Succulent Journal," which went home with Rafael Sepulveda and Jeff Boggan.

The threat of rain didn't keep nineteen members and three guests from attending the October 24 meeting, many of those lured by Liliana Cracraft's program, "The History of Tequila and Mescal." Joining us for an enjoyable evening were John Stansell, Margo Meave, and Diana Villarreal.

We ended up giving away fifteen door prizes after plants originally intended for the Exchange Table (which we didn't have) became door prizes. Josie Watts and Bruce Moffett donated ten plants: a Euphorbia mammillaris variegata, won by visitor Margo Meave; three Sansevierias, won by Wally Ward, Jeff Boggan, and Pinke Neck; a Mammillaria, won by Richard Holland; three Agaves, won by Suzanne Siegel, Teresa S. Garcia, and Lynne Schafer; a Haemanthus pauculifolius, won by Imtiaz Bangee; and a Pencil Cactus, won by guest Diana Villarreal.

Wally Ward donated a big section of Huernia hysterix, which Cindy Gray was happy to win. Wally also donated two very nice Pachypodium lealii saundersii plants which he grew from seeds given him by Dick McEuen. These were won by Rolando Ontiveros and Milton Pierson.

Lastly, Liliana Cracraft donated two little bottles of tequila. Lucky winners were David van Langen, who grabbed the Patron Silver Tequila; and Bruce Moffett, who took home the Gran Centenario Reposado Tequila.

Congratulations to all the lucky winners!

As always, please send any news of HCSS members and their families to [kathyfewox@aim.com](mailto:kathyfewox@aim.com).

<b>Calendar:</b>	
<b>November 28, 2018</b>	7:30 pm Membership Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. Program by Wally Ward "Sansevieria: Practical Growing Advice and Door-Prize Cuttings for Attendees."
<b>December 2, 2018</b>	Christmas Dinner at Rivas Italian Restaurant, 1117 Missouri St. Social hour at 5:00pm followed by dinner at 6:00pm
<b>January 9, 2018</b>	7:30 pm Board Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center.

## 2018 Show and Sale

The Show took place September 8 and 9 at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center.

There were 82 plants entered in the show by Liliana and Mike Cracraft, Richard Stamper, Mario Rizo, Bruce Moffett, Josie Watts, Robert Smith and Blake Smith.

Judges were Stan Russ, Jeff Boggan, Karla Halpaap-Wood for cacti, Noreen Tolman, Josie Watts, Grant Wells for other succulents.

Clerks were Cindy Gray, Mario Rizo, Richard Holland, Victoria Castillo and Kathleen Canty.

Entered species in **Division 1, Cacti** were

Ariocarpus retusus  
 Astrophytum capricorn  
 Cereus peruvianus  
 Cumulopuntia rossiana "Gnome"  
 Echinocactus grusonii  
 Echinocactus texensis  
 Echinocactus hybrid chamaecerus  
 Echinocereus rigidissimus  
 Eriocyse senilis  
 Maihueniopsis glomerata  
 Mammillaria carmenae  
 Mammillaria coahuilensis  
 Mammillaria crucigera  
 Mammillaria elegana  
 Mammillaria gemnispina (long form)  
 Mammillaria gemnispina 'Big Red'  
 Mammillaria lenta  
 Mammillaria longimama  
 Mammillaria magnimama  
 Mammillaria pectinifera  
 Mammillaria plumosa  
 Mammillaria spinosissima  
 Mammillaria sphaerica  
 Notocactus magnificus  
 Opuntia rufida  
 Opuntia uncradasya alba  
 Thelocactus molinensis

**Division 2, other succulents**

Agave 'shark skin'  
 Agave vistoria regina  
 Agave macrocantha  
 Agave titanota  
 Agave Kichickan 'marfinata'  
 Agave schidigera 'shira ito no ohi'  
 Agave potatorum vaniegated

Crassalaceae arborescens (Vargi)

Gasteria armstrongii  
 Gasteria rampleskin  
 Gasteria truncata  
 Echeveria hybrid clover leaf  
 Euphorbia abdelkuri  
 Euphorbia bongolavensis  
 Euphorbia delfinensis  
 Euphorbia francoisii  
 Euphorbia francoisii crassicaulis fma. rubufolia  
 Euphorbia gamkensis  
 Euphorbia gottliebii  
 Euphorbia perrieri  
 Euphorbia waringiae  
 Haworthia bayeri  
 Haworthia magnifica var. splendens  
 Haworthia pygmae x H. emelyae var. major  
 Haworthia springbokvlaktensis  
 Haworthia venosa tessellata  
 Haworthia cv. Yuki Keshiki  
 Lithops avcampiae "Kurvman Form"  
 Lithops avcampiae "Bella Ketty"  
 Lithops bromfieldii var. glaudiae  
 Lithops dorotheae  
 Lithops divergens var. multipurctata  
 Lithops pseudotruncatella subsp. vlokii  
 Pachypodium makayense  
 Pachypodium rosulatum var. gracilius

**Division 3, artistic displays**

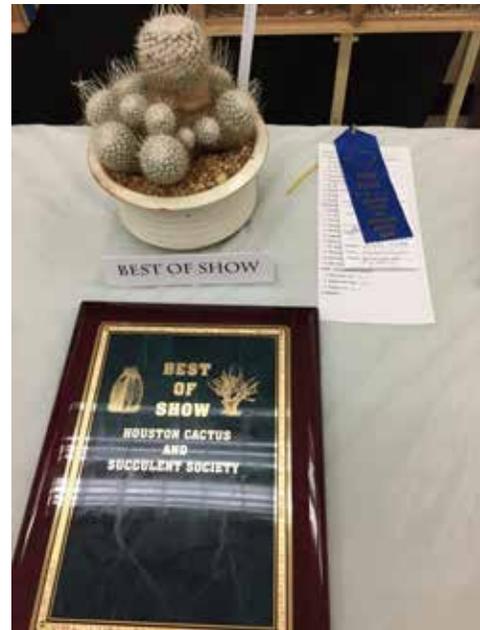
Euphorbia francoisii

**Division 5, hanging baskets**

Euphorbia platyclada  
 Ceropogia woodii



Best Succulent  
*Haworthia springbokvlakensis*  
Richard Stamper



Best of Show  
*Mammillaria gemnispina* (long form)  
Josie Watts



1st Sweepstakes  
*Ariocarpus retusus*  
Richard Stamper



2nd Sweepstakes  
*Notocactus magnificus*  
Robert Smith



Best Cactus  
*Mammillaria crucigera*  
Josie Watts



Best hanging Basket  
*Euphorbia platyclada*  
Robert Smith



Best novice  
*Echinocactus grusonii*  
Blake Smith



Best artistic  
*Euphorbia francoisii*  
Richard Stamper

## Our member Mary Pinké Neck

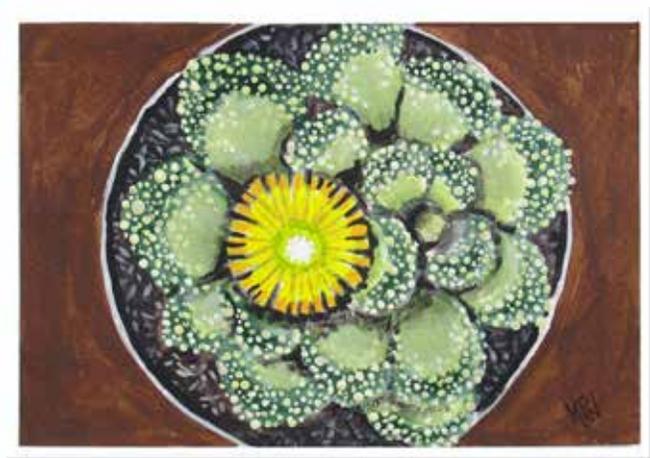


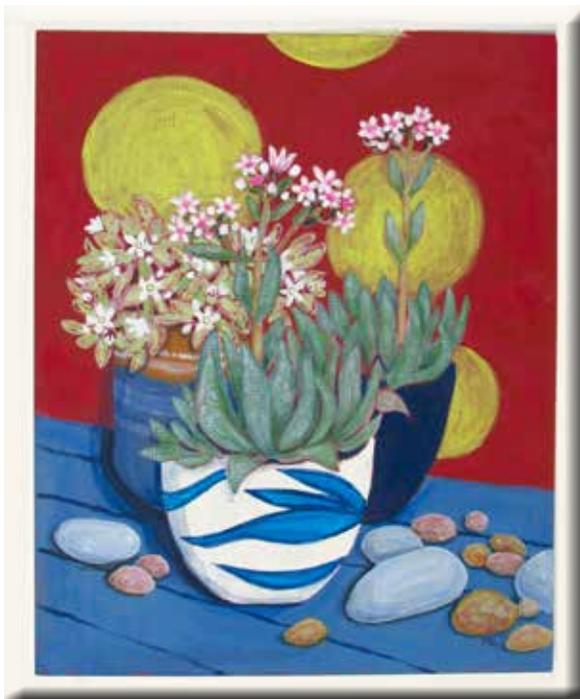
Why do I paint? Art in many forms has been a lifelong passion. I thank my mother, an art teacher, for her encouragement. Although I took art classes in public schools and at UT Austin, I consider myself as self-taught. I continue to learn something with every piece. I use watercolors and acrylics in my paintings of animals, plants, and people. It is important to me to blend scientific accuracy with art. For instance, I want a plant to be correct in form and color but I want to portray it with grace and elegance. If I have several different objects in a painting, they will only be together because they can be found together in real life. I don't paint wings on turtles or an orchid bloom on a cactus. My goal is to share some of the amazing and diverse life on our unique planet.

My botanical art can be seen on Flickr:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/8113246@N02/albums/72157601998626939>

My sincere thanks to the HCSS for displaying my art at the 2018 show.







## November Succulent of the Month

Jeff Boggan

### *Euphorbia Pachypodioides*

Alternate name: *Euphorbia antankara*

CITES Status: **Critically Endangered**

#### Habitat:

Decimal latitude longitude ●●● -13.01667\_49.13333 Falaise de L'Ankarana, Western Madagascar. It grows on steep limestone cliffs in the Tsingy of Ankarana reserve. It is not found outside the reserve due to habitat destruction, collection, fire, etc...

#### Description:

The plant was named pachypodioides because it appears very similar to a Pachypodium. Some specimens may produce branches from the base with age. Typically, it is a single stem that can grow to 35 to 40 inches tall and around 4 inches thick. It will produce a cluster of small red flowers which resemble a bouquet. The cyanthia occur from around the apex of the plant.

#### Propagation:

Dick McEuen reported in the March-April 2010 KK that the Madagascar *Euphorbia* species like *E. decaryi* and *E. francoisii* can be propagated by leaf cuttings. I do not know if this is true of *E. pachypodioides*. Since I have only one specimen I will not be experimenting on it. All the specimens that I have seen were seed grown. *E. pachypodioides* is not self-fertile. You need to have 2 specimens to cross pollinate the flowers. Branch cuttings can be rooted or grafted.

#### Experience:

Dave Thomas gave me the specimen that continues to grow in my greenhouse. It was about 30 inches tall. I replanted it into a larger pot with a mixture of coconut core, expanded shale, pumice, and compost. It is in the center of the greenhouse and receives about 80% full sun. It blooms during the winter months. Since this is a winter growing plant it is watered once a month year around.

#### Availability:

This plant is available from various succulent growers like Dave Thomas, Out of Africa, East Austin Succulents, eBay, etc.

#### References:

1. <https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/44412/10899538>
2. [http://www.llifle.com/Encyclopedia/SUCCULENTS/Family/Euphorbiaceae/25960/Euphorbia\\_pachypodioides](http://www.llifle.com/Encyclopedia/SUCCULENTS/Family/Euphorbiaceae/25960/Euphorbia_pachypodioides)
3. <http://www.bihrmann.com/caudiciforms/subs/eup-pac-sub.asp>
4. <https://www.arkive.org/euphorbia/euphorbia-pachypodioides/image-G91992.html>
5. <https://www.discoverlife.org/mp/20l?id=GBIF438962017>



## December Cactus of the Month

Cindy Gray

### *Mammillaria chionocephala* 'ritteriana'

SYNONYMS: *Mammillaria formosa* subsp. *Chionocephala*, *Mammillaria ritteriana*,

*Mammillaria caerulea*, and *Neomammillaria chionocephala*

COMMON NAMES: None available at this time.

HABIT/DISTRIBUTION: Found in Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Durango, Mexico, and Phoenix, Arizona. Unfortunately there is little information available on this plant.

DESCRIPTION (STEM, FLOWERS, FRUITS): Pinkish white or cream flowers, 0.4 inches (1 cm) in diameter which appear between the tubercles in the spring and flushes of them appear intermittently into the summer. The fruit is carmine red, with brown seeds inside.

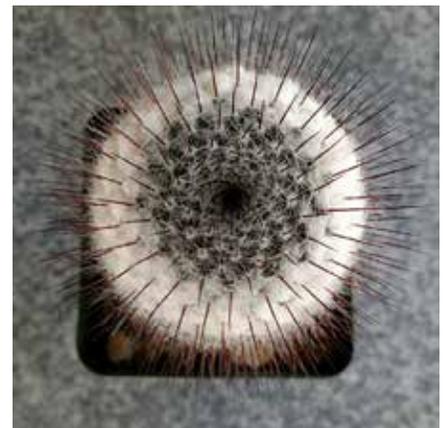


CULTIVATION / GROWTH: The plants growth habit when young is to stay as a single body, as it reaches maturity it is not uncommon for the plant to start to clump up. The body of the plant when young is a global shape but as it ages it becomes slightly taller than it is wide, approximately 4 inches (10 cm.), x 3 inches (7.5 cm.). The body has the tightly packed tubercles common to many *Mammillaria*'s and there is an abundance of white wool between the tubercles. Radial spine: 22 – 24, bristle-like, white, to 8mm (0.3 inches) long. Central spine: 2 – 4, rarely as many as 6, white with darker tips, to 6 mm (.02 inches) long. The plant is hardy in Phoenix to 28 degrees F with a minimum average temperature of 50 degrees F. The plant prefers light shade to full sun. Water sparingly, requires good drainage. This particular plant really enjoys having some limestone added to the mix, as do many of the plants that have woolly growths on them. An attractive plant, particularly for lovers of this genus. A cool winter rest period seems to help flowering.

AVAILABILITY: Available on eBay.

REMARKS / COMMENTS / MY EXPERIENCE: I keep my plant in the greenhouse and water weekly during the summer and sparingly during the winter months. I did not water my plants last winter and some did not make to spring time. I had the heater set too high for the freezing period and did not adjust for the warmer winter temperatures fortunately this plant survived.

REFERENCES: *Mammillaria chionocephala* J.A. Purpus, LLIFLE - Encyclopedia of living forms, CactiGuide.com, and Desert-Tropicals.com.



**December Succulent of the Month****Liliana Cracraft****NAME: *Euphorbia pulcherrima***

**COMMON NAMES:** Poinsettia, Mexican Flame Leaf, Fire Plant, Flower of Christmas Eve, Yuletide Star (U.S.); Estrella de Navidad, Flor de Nochebuena, Flor de Pascua (México).



**INTRODUCTION:** The poinsettia is referred in México as nochebuena, flor de pascua or pascuaxochitl (in Nahuatl). The Aztecs cultivated and appreciated this plant which they called “cuetlaxochitl,” meaning flower of petals hard as leather. The plant has now become a decoration in many countries because it is adaptable to almost all climates. It is particularly well known for its red and green foliage and is widely used in Christmas floral displays, tradition that began during the Spanish conquest. Franciscan and Augustine Friars took Poinsettias back to Spain, and began using them to decorate Christmas Nativity scenes.

According to an ancient Mexican legend, on a December night in the 17th Century, a group of clergymen were setting up a Nativity scene. A little girl gave them a bouquet of white flowers to adorn the manger where the infant Jesus would lie. That night, during midnight mass, the flowers turned red. Since then, the flower of Christmas Eve, or poinsettia, has become a popular floral symbol of Christmas.

Poinsettias derive their common English name from Dr. Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first United States Minister to México, who introduced the plant to the U.S. in 1825.

As beautiful as this plant is, it has only been presented once before in this Club as a succulent of the month. Perhaps because there is a debate if indeed, Poinsettias are succulents. The last time it was presented was January 1999, and the presenter was me! Hard to believe it was 19 years ago. On the other hand, general articles about poinsettias and Dr. Poinsett in the KK have been numerous, and are listed in the references.

**HABITAT/DISTRIBUTION:**

The poinsettia is native to México. It is found in the wild in deciduous tropical forests at moderate elevations from southern Sinaloa, down the entire Pacific coast of Mexico to Chiapas and Guatemala. It is also found in the interior in the hot, seasonally dry forests of Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Chiapas. Reports of *E. pulcherrima* growing in the wild in Nicaragua and Costa Rica have yet to be confirmed by botanists.

**DESCRIPTION:**

The plant can be 3 feet tall to 5-6 feet. The petal-like upper leaves (bracts) turn bright red when they come into bloom between October and April, in response to the longer nights. Actually, the real flowers appear as

an insignificant cluster of yellow berries called cyathia. The leaves are alternately placed and its stems grow between 10 and 20 centimeters. The original plants have bright red leaves at the top. The new varieties grown in nurseries all over the world can have dark red, pale pink, light yellow, or white leaves.

#### CULTIVATION/GROWTH:

In its wild state, it grows in tropical jungles or forests yet it can be cultivated and used in gardens and interiors for decorative purposes. They are grown under controlled light in order to achieve the desired color. Since light and temperature are determining factors of the plant development, when diminished, flowering begins.

A good Poinsettia should be compact with lateral branches and have large, brilliantly-colored flowers, a closed center, healthy foliage and be an early bloomer tolerant to heat and cold. Light-medium light areas are best, but they can tolerate low light. Avoid full sun to prevent burned leaves. Water when the soil surface becomes dry. Leaves should be sprinkled gently with a mist. Keep temperature between 60 and 70°F. Flower pots should not be in direct contact with the floor; they should be placed on a bed of gravel or another pot. The soil should be sterile and free of weeds and insects, toxic elements, herbicides, heavy metals or soluble salts. Humus can be added. This plant requires high levels of nitrogen and potassium. Manure, super phosphates, or ammonium fertilizers should not be used.

#### REMARKS/COMMENTS:

The main use of these plants is ornamental. However, Francisco Hernandez, a Spanish physician from the 16th Century, described the use of poinsettias among the Aztecs, to increase the milk in nursing mothers in his book entitled "History of the Plants of the New Spain." Other books describe the use of the red leaves mixed with a pine resin to dye textiles.

This is the plant that sells the most in the U.S.

#### REFERENCES:

- KK 1983 Nov/Dec. - T.L. Duncan. The Christmas Gift Poinsettia.  
 KK 1983 Nov/Dec. – Flame Leaf vs Poinsettia – from the Lone Star Gardener .  
 KK 1995 Nov/Dec. - Ann Ross. Legends of the Poinsettia.  
 KK 1997 Nov/Dec. - C.Z. Guest. Poinsettia Plants Still Victims of Bad Press.  
 KK 1997 Jan/Feb. - Poinsettia, Make Your Plant Bloom Again. Ellison Greenhouses.  
 KK 1997 Nov/Dec. - Mic Barnette. The Name Poinsettia.  
 KK 1999 Nov/Dec. - Poinsettias Can Hold Color Until Late Spring. Houston Chronicle.  
 KK 2006 Jan/Feb. - Sue Haffner. Poinsettia Culture.  
 KK 2009 Nov/Dec. - Liliana Cracraft. Poinsettia, Mexico's Gift to the World.

You can find all these articles in our website's newsletter archives [www.hcsstex.org](http://www.hcsstex.org)

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