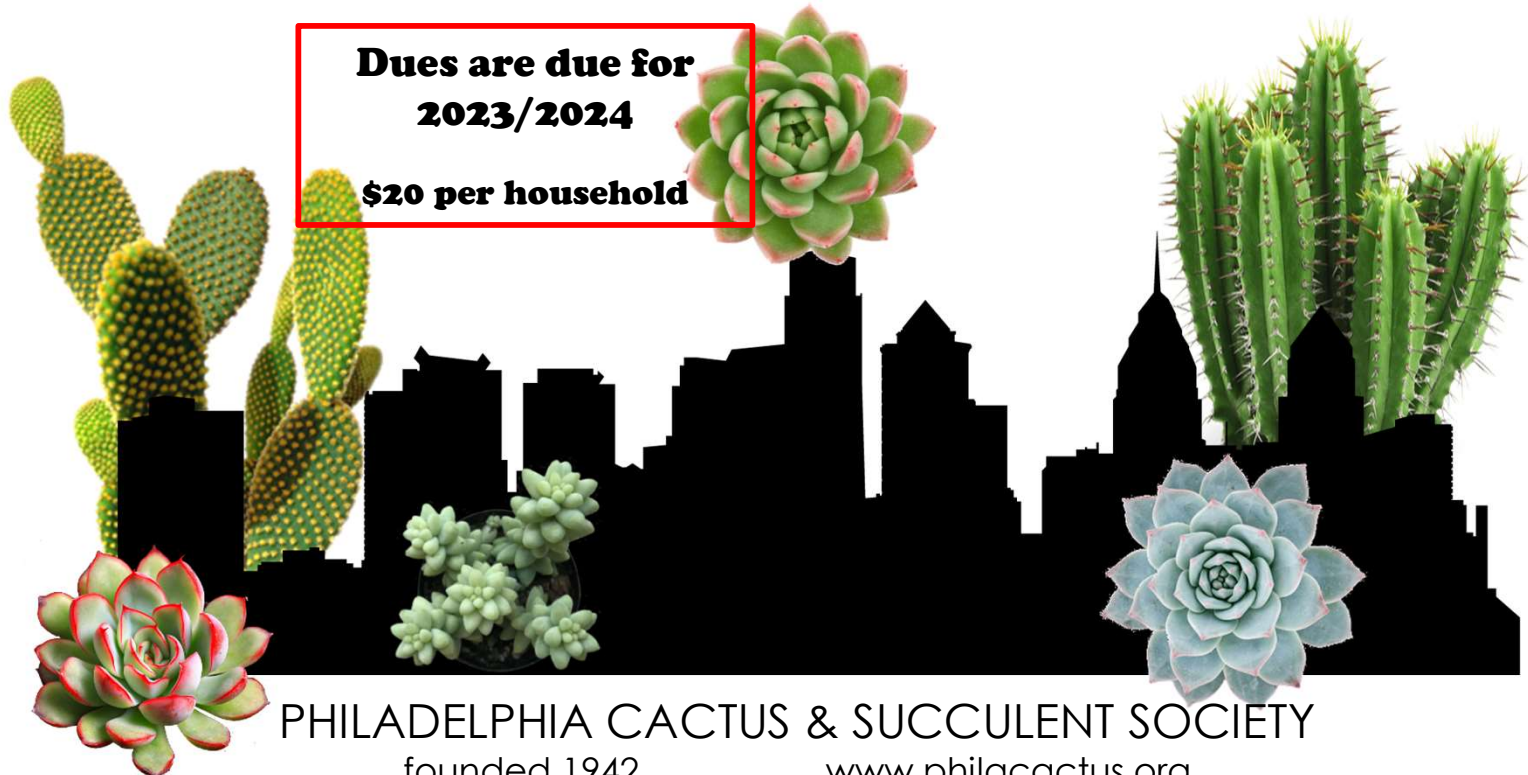


**Dues are due for
2023/2024**

\$20 per household



PHILADELPHIA CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
founded 1942 www.philacactus.org

2nd MEETING OF 2023/24 SEASON

OCTOBER 8th , 2023

11 AM – 3 PM The Discovery Center (Philadelphia)

Please bring something to share!!

POTS

What type of pot should I use? Does the material matter?
Should I top dress? What kinds of top dressing should I use?



SOIL

How do I make my own soil? What do the various ingredients do?

Join Paul W as he will take the mystery out of pots & soil so you can be more successful with your succulents!

My Trip to Huntington

Join Irene Cassidy as she talks about her recent trip to the Huntington Botanical Gardens. The Huntington Botanical Gardens encompasses about 130 acres & features living collections in 16 stunning themed gardens with more than 83,000 living plants, including rare and endangered species, and a laboratory for botanical conservation and research.

(<https://huntington.org/botanical-gardens>)

By David Schultz

A frequent question that is asked by members, new and more practiced, and visitors to our show and sale is "What soil do I use?" There is no ONE answer; Every member has a slightly different mix and sometimes slightly different mixes for different plants. The MOST IMPORTANT factor is DRAINAGE and above all, the various choices of grit, pumice and expanded shale work toward that goal. If you have a soil mix already and are concerned if it will work, you can test it by taking a handful of the mix, wetting it thoroughly holding it in your hand and forming a "mudball". Opening your hand, the ball should fall completely apart. If it does not fully collapse, it probably needs more drainage material added.

The recipe for the soil mix that the CCSS has used and offered in the past is, on the whole, rather simple, consisting of 3 different materials. The term "parts" below refers to any container or scoop you choose to add the components. I usually use a 5-gal bucket to mix it up in and the "part" container is a sour cream container.

15 parts organic potting material

The CCSS has been using coir (dried coconut fiber) as the base since it is fairly neutral and does not degrade quickly. See the following notes for other suggestions.

7 parts Espoma Soil Perfector (ESP in the following notes)

5 parts #2 or #3 sharp sand

Again, see the notes for more description and options.

Optional: (1) part Osmocote or superphosphate pellet fertilizer

Stir, shake and mix all of the components thoroughly. A container with a lid that is secure is most helpful for the mixing. For much larger quantities, a clean concrete mixer is also very handy, although out of the scale for most of us. The 5-gal bucket is often available with the lid and cleaning a sheetrock joint compound bucket works well.

Notes:

Organic matter: The coir will need to be soaked for a number of hours before use to thoroughly wet the material and break it up completely. Overnight works best. Commercial cactus mixes are generally not ideal as they do not have enough drainage material. These can be used as the organic base in place of coir.

Also, Metro-Mix, Pro-Mix or any other peat-based soil mix would be a good starter. One caution: peat-based soil mixes may be difficult to re-wet if they have become very dry, so adding a squirt of dish detergent to your water before that first watering after a dormancy period will be a good idea.

We are using Espoma Soil Perfector (ESP) as one of the components. It is available as a soil additive from some nursery centers (not Lowe's or Home Depot). ESP, norlite, solite and haydite are some examples of expanded shale. These are lightweight expanded shale aggregates whereby mined shale is heated to very high temperatures and "blown up", resulting in a rather porous and relatively lightweight ceramic aggregate that is a very good replacement for pumice. It is generally a darker color (dark gray or brown) than pumice (dirty white to light gray). The expanded shale products are being used in hydroponics, as soil additives, and as a replacement for sand in concrete and concrete blocks to make them lighter.

Natural pumice, sold as Dry Stall (NOT Stall Dry) through Agway for horse stalls, was our first choice but is no longer available, except as an horticultural additive at a much higher price. Other alternatives are vermiculite or perlite, both of which have long-term issues that are somewhat negative: Vermiculite breaks down to mush over a period of time and perlite is very light (and bright white), floating to the top of pots. Another alternative that has been used is kitty litter. Be certain that it is a baked variety and does not contain any chemical deodorants. The stability can be checked by soaking a handful in water overnight; It should NOT turn to a mushy mess! Turface can also be used and is available as a soil additive.

The grit that the CCSS has been using is #2 sharp sand from CT Sand & Gravel in South Windsor, CT. You can use builder's or tube sand available from Lowe's and Home Depot, among other builder's supply locations. **DO NOT** use play sand or beach sand, as the sand grains have been rounded over and will compact (allowing you to build sand castles with wet sand).

You can also use chicken grit which in our area is crushed granite. It is available at some feed stores (e.g., Blue Seal, Agway) as either crushed granite grit or chicken grit. The "grower" or "layer" size grit would be ideal.

MATT OPEL'S MESEMB MIX

- 1 part sandy loam
- 2 parts sharp sand
- 2 parts vermiculite
- 2 parts perlite
- 1 part Turface (calcined clay), pumice, expanded shale



"This is a soil-based mix containing essentially no organic material, for use with more delicate succulents, such as Conophytum. I picked up the basic idea for it while working at Mesa Garden, where, back in the day, just about everything was potted in "Mabel Mix," which was equal parts sand, pumice, and native desert soil, the soil coming from the leftovers from road grading.

"Loam" is used here in the soil science sense: a soil composed of silt (mineral particles smaller than sand grains) with some sand and a little clay, not in the gardening sense of "any fertile soil." New Mexico desert loam is hard to come by in Connecticut, but sandy loam subsoil, from a few feet down, with very little organic content, is an acceptable substitute. "

DEB DONALDSON'S RECLIPES

for haworthia:

50% pro mix, 25% akadama, 25% mix of smaller sized pumice and gran i grit

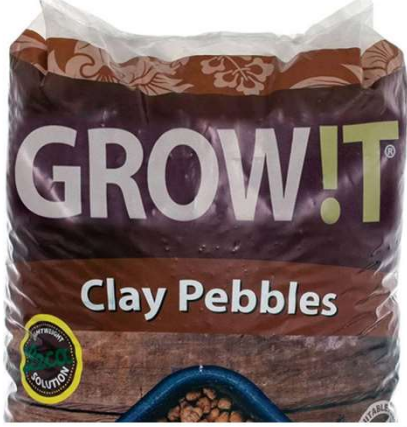
For other succulents:

50% pro mix, 25% both sizes gran I grit, 25% both sizes pumice (If it's a pup I normally just use smaller sizes of gran I grit and pumice)

For cactus:

25% pro mix, 25% gran I grit, both sizes, 50% of pumice, both sizes, My cactus vendor near Oakland gave me tip to use lots of pumice!

SOIL ADDITIVES



Peat moss, perlite, bark ash, starter charge- with gypsum, dolomitic limestone, and slow release nitrogen.

Peat Moss, Endomycorrhize, horticultural coarse grade perlite Dolomitic & Calcitic Limestone (pH adjuster) Macronutrients, Micronutrients' Wetting agent, promix



granite



pumice

Something to talk about ..

**Dues are due for
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2023

Poachers Pluck South Africa's 'Succulent' Plants for Chinese Market

<https://www.voanews.com/a/poachers-pluck-south-africa-s-succulent-plants-for-chinese-market-/7107635.html>

Books

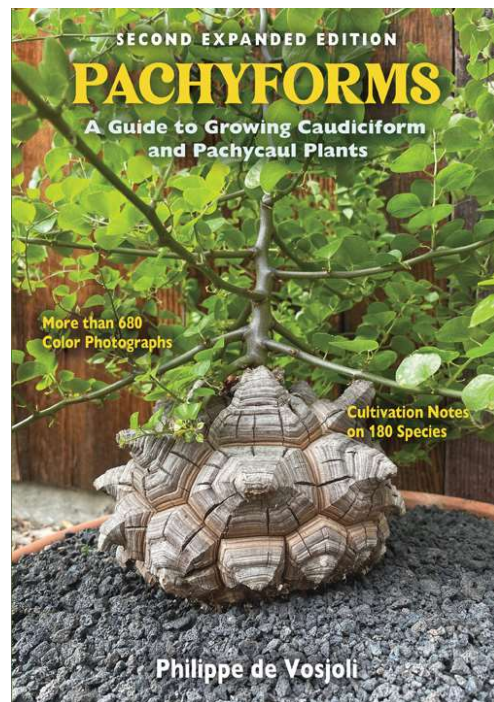
Pachyforms - A Guide to Growing Caudiciform and Pachycaul Plants

Author: Philippe de Vosjoli

Includes updated taxonomy, photos of species in the wild and in cultivation, and notes on 180 species.

Pachyforms is a complete guide to the selection and cultivation of the increasingly popular group of plants known as caudiciforms and pachycauls, species that develop thick bodies with sculptural forms. In Pachyforms, you will find information that will allow you to grow some of the most impressive plants in the world: baobabs and boojum trees; members of the passionflower family with bodies as large and wide as a witch's cauldron; species in the cucumber family that acquire the form of flying saucers; yams with complex geometric forms; morning glories with gorgeous flowers and egg-shaped weathered bodies.

This new updated edition of Pachyforms is illustrated with more than 680 color photographs and packed with practical advice, including cultivation notes on more than 180 species.



https://www.exoticplantbooks.com/detail/?product_id=1203

From CCSS:

We were able to make a group order and took advantage of the really great deal that the author,

Philippe de Vosjoli, was able to offer. The book is the Second Expanded Edition of Pachyforms, originally published in 2004 and long out of print. Current offers for the book are well over \$100!

The new edition is updated and expanded, with more cultivation notes on 180 species. It has nearly double the number of pages (581 in the 2023 edition vs. 319 in the first edition) and has over 680 color photographs. The retail price is \$85.00 and we are able to offer the copies we have for **\$56.00**.

There are a limited number and have been added to the society's rather extensive sale books list (tinyurl.com/CCSSbooks). A couple of copies will be available at the October meeting.

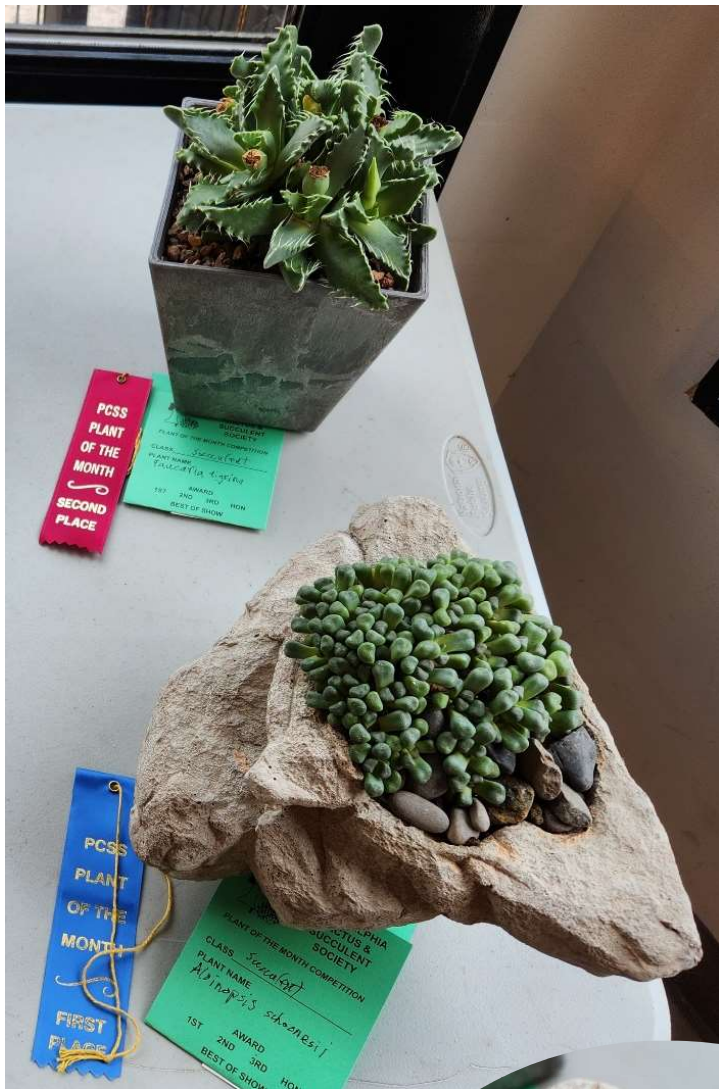
Plant of the month

SEPTEMBER



Plant of the month

SEPTEMBER



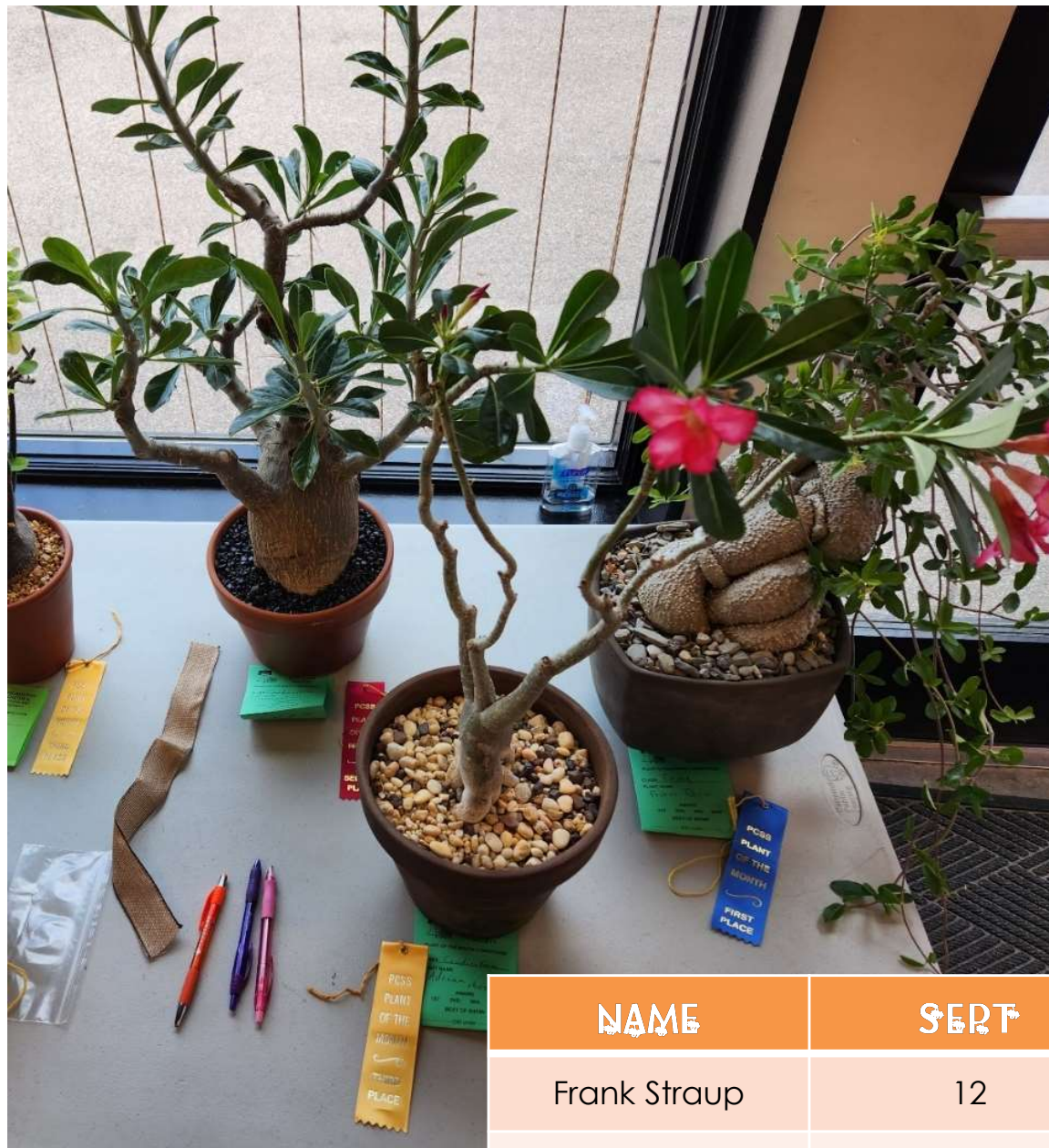
Plant of the month

SEPTEMBER



Plant of the month

SEPTEMBER



NAME	SEPT	TOTAL	PTS
Frank Straup	12	12	
David McCarthy	4	4	
Linda McCarthy	6	6	
Irene Cassidy	27	27	
Jeff Sedwin	22	22	
Lee Garner	18	18	
Mike Slater	22	22	
Peg Kregel	5	5	
Will Hall	25	25	

Plant of the month

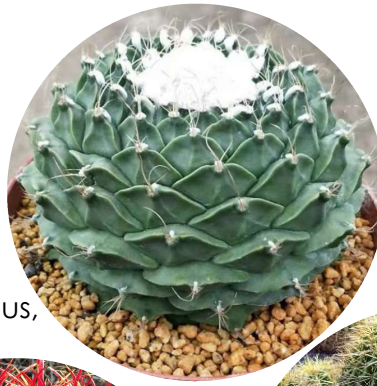
CACTUS

Echinocactus II

subfamilies Cactoideae

tribes Echinocactae

examples Echinocactus, Ferocactus,
Leuchtenbergia, Stenocactus, Ariocarpus,
Obregonia, Aztekium



SUCCULENTS

Crassulaceae 1

subfamilies Cotyledonoideae and Kalanchoideae

examples Tylecodon, Cotyledon, Kalanchoe



SPECIAL CATEGORY

Oldies but Goodies - Subdivided into two groups

Plants in your possession for 10+ years

Plants in your possession for 20+ years





COMING ATTRACTIONS
COMING ATTRACTIONS
COMING ATTRACTIONS
COMING ATTRACTIONS

Moving to Cathedral Village 2024!!

You heard right! PCSS will be returning to Cathedral Village starting January of 2024 ..
We will be discussing the future and posting the schedule for 2024so stay tuned!

LESCSS Show & Sale

October 7-8

Thanks to a certain tropical storm, the Lower East Side show and sale has been postponed. It will now take place on October 7th and 8th, which means there's even more time to plan your weekend in NYC.

Visit the club at [instagram.com/les.css](https://www.instagram.com/les.css) for more details.

PHS Flower Show

March 4-12, 2023

CT Show & Sale

April 12-14, 2024

<https://www.ctcactusociety.org/annual-show-sale>

Member show & tell ..

Please send pictures of your plants to Tim at: philadelphia.cactus@gmail.com

Happy
Halloween!



President:	Irene Cassidy (latte_datte@yahoo.com cell: 302.883.4644)
Vice-President:	Jeff Sedwin
Treasurer:	Renee Thompson
Asst. Treasurer:	Fanny Warren
Recording Secretary:	Paul Wesolowski
Communications:	Timothy Day
Affiliate Representative:	Christina Day
Newsletter:	Irene Cassidy
Flower Show Exhibit:	Paul Wesolowski
Hospitality:	Danielle & Denise
Library:	Bridget Irons
POM:	Will Hall
Flower Show Ribbons:	JoAnn Schailey