

CACTUS CORNER NEWS

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

<http://www.fresnocss.com>

Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

Vol. 38 No. 10

October 2020

Aloes: A Guide to Varieties and Care

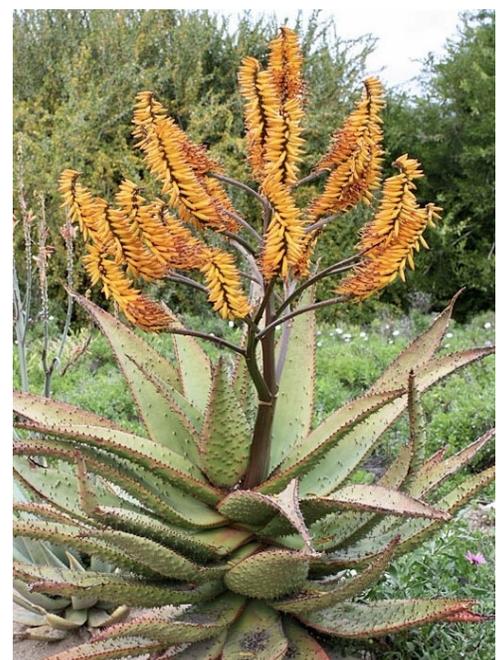
by: Robert Scott

Robert will be sharing his knowledge of the genus Aloe. Covering both common and rare varieties, Robert will be showing us the beauty of these hardy succulents; from small grass like aloes to giant trees. With over 400 species and hundreds of hybrids, there is an aloe for every type of grower.

Biography: Robert joined our club 8 years ago and jumped right in. Since joining, he has been the club's treasure, board member, Sale Chairmen and is currently our President. He oversees the Fresno Home & Garden Show, Member's Sale Night and our Annual Show & Sale. He's a very busy guy, but enjoys helping the club.

Robert first got into growing cacti and succulents as a food source for his pet tortoises. The two hobbies worked well together, especially when you have a lot of animals to feed. It wasn't till his best friend introduced him to hybridizing aloes that the succulent bug really took off. Sense then, Robert's plant collection has only continued to grow. Aloes are one of his favorites and he currently has over 160 pure species and hybrids. He currently works in the Fresno County Agriculture Department. He has wanted to open his own cactus and succulent nursery but life always got in the way. He's excited to announce that on October 6, 2020 his online store will be up and running. www.desertrootsnursery.com

Robert may be a busy guy, but he always makes time for the club and is happy to help members. Please welcome him back as our Zoom presenter this month.



FROM THE PREZ...

Hello FCSS Membership,

There's not much to report this month, but it sure is nice to see blue skies again! The fires that have been burning around us are absolutely horrible. It's even worse when they are so close to home. I hope all of you, including your family members and friends are safe and out of reach of the fires.



It's also nice that the nights have started to cool off. It's a sign that fall is almost here. We know that hot days are still possible around here but winter is around the corner. With the cooler nights all of our winter growing plants are going to start waking up. You might have seen your aeoniums and bulbs starting to push out some new growth. It's time to start watering them but only small amounts at first. Everything can still be watered as well but soils will stay moist longer so reduce the amount and times you water.

This month I will be giving the Zoom presentation for our meeting. The talk I will be on the different Aloe species and how to grow them here. There are lots of hardy aloes and there are a few that would do amazingly in your yard. To add a little thrill to the presentation I'm going to be showing a few of my turtles and tortoises that I care for. There has always been interest in them and this time I get to show them off.

The club meeting is October 1, at 6:30pm. We will wait about 10 minutes before starting so everyone can get logged in, but you may join at any time. Further down in the newsletter we will have some more information on how to join the Zoom meeting. It's really easy and has long as you have the Zoom application you can join on any device. A few days before the meeting you will receive another email from myself with the Zoom link that will take you directly to the meeting. If you haven't been receiving anything from Zoom or myself, please email me so I can make sure your email is on the list. If you have any issues you may contact any of the Board members and they will be happy to help. We would like to get as many of our members possible on Zoom, joining our meetings.

For now I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy!

Robert Scott

Club access:

President, Robert Scott, 559-960-3665, rob_scott85@yahoo.com, Rosanna Rojas, 999-0017, rfrojas96@gmail.com; Treasurer, Michele Roberts, 645-5257, robertshowse@comcast.net; Editor, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu; Publisher, Craig Roberts, Refreshments, Nancy Jobin; Webmaster, Vickie Veen, vickieveen@gmail.com; Sunshine, Carole Grosch, 323-8602, cgg266@comcast.net. Librarian, Marilyn Carter, 977-6611, mkc3253@gmail.com;

The First Lithops Flowers of the Season

(Peter Beiersdorfer)

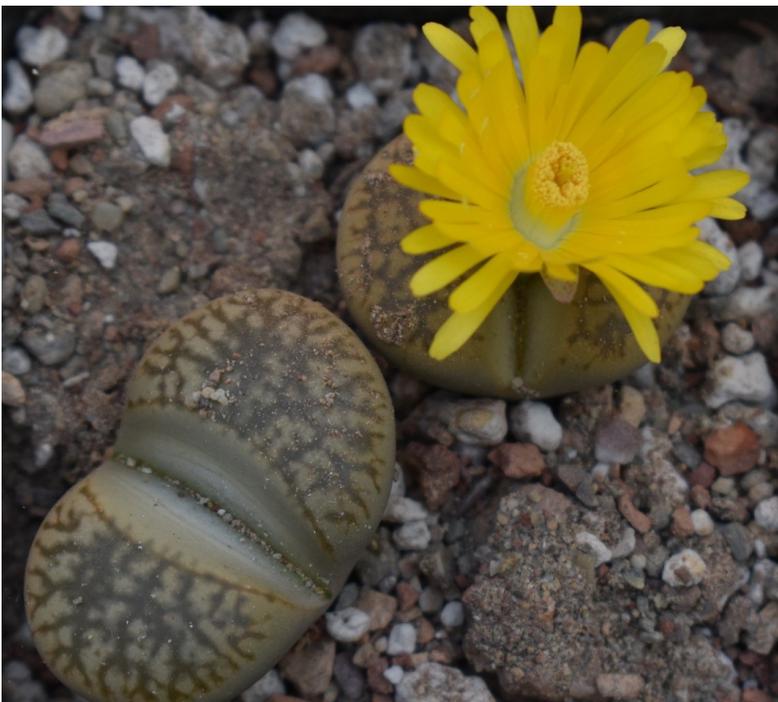
This is the time of year, when flower buds start to emerge between the leaf pairs that form the heads of a lithops. In my collection, the first flowers of the season are produced by the species *L. pseudotruncatella*. In fact, *L. pseudotruncatella* ssp. *volkii* started flowering for me on August 7, followed by *L. pseudotruncatella* ssp. *mundtii* three days later [pic 1,2]. On August 30, *pseudotruncatella* ssp. *denticata* opened up, followed by ssp. *archerae* on August 31 [3,4].

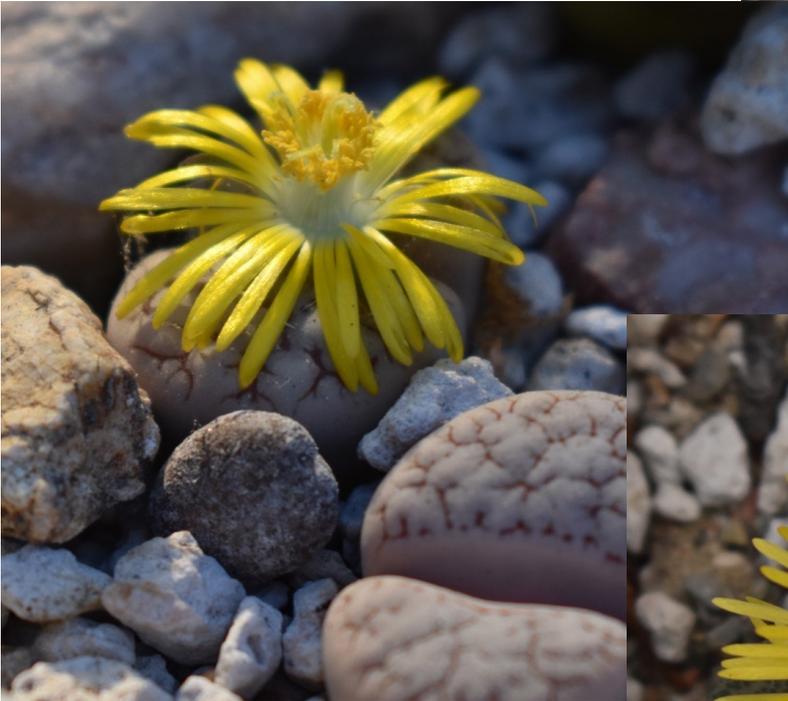
When the flower first opens it is, typically, still smaller than the head itself. But the petals continue to grow every day, and soon the flower totally covers the plants head and, in the case of *L. pseudotruncatella* and in the case of many other Lithops species, the flower petals extend well beyond the head. [pic x] This process can go on for a week before the petals start shriveling up. Unlike, say most cactus flowers, which stay opened for only a day (or night) or two, Lithops, thus, give us an extended time to enjoy the display. You are unlikely to miss a given flower even if you don't inspect your plants daily.

Flowers on different heads on a given plant or on different individuals may open days apart. This prolongs the display. Also, I noticed a very pleasant smell from the flowers of *L. pseudotruncatella* *denticata* 'Nauchas'. The smell is very similar to that of the flower of *Pleiospilos simulans* [pic 5]. I was lucky that one of each happened to bloom at the same time as *denticata* so that I could make a direct comparison of their fragrance. The difference in their fragrance is that the *Pleiospilos* flowers have a stronger buttery smell than the Lithops flowers, while the Lithops flowers mix in a tinge of lemon. Both *Pleiospilos* and Lithops are part of the mesemb family, and their flowers are similar: The same shade of yellow, and Many show a white central ring as the flower age and the petals grow longer.

Soon other lithops species will vie for attention with their flowers. On September 2, both of my *L. gracilidelineata* (ssp. *waldroniae* and ssp. *brandbergensis*) opened their first flowers [pic 6,7]. They were joined by *L. gesinae* ssp. *annae* [pic 8]. Six days later, a flower of *L. vallis-mariae* opened up [pic 9].

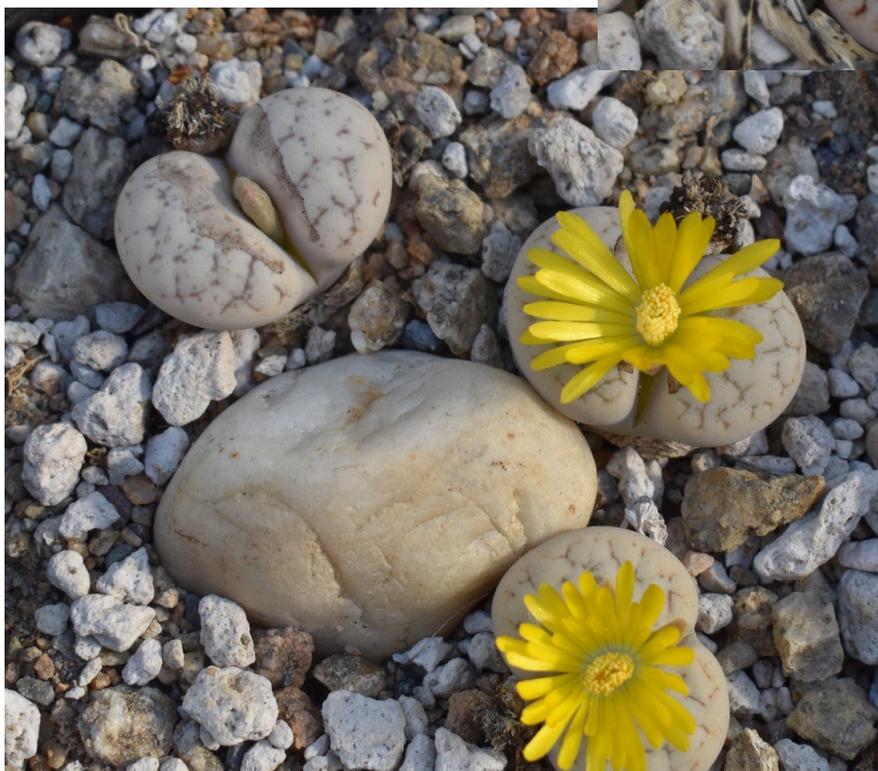
I should point out that the first month of the Lithops flowering season was exclusively dominated by flowers from species that grow in the summer rainfall area of Namibia, i.e., an area which is inland and north of the Republic of South Africa. It will be interesting to see which species will open up next in the coming months.





Reminder....

2021 Dues
Are Due
By December



Renewal
Application
On The
Next Page

Avoid the
Rush
Send Yours
In Early!



2021

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

Membership Application: New or Renewal
Annual Membership Renewals Due by January 1st

Single Membership with email newsletter X \$20.00 = _____

Single Membership with paper newsletter X \$30.00 = _____

Family Membership with email newsletter X \$30.00 = _____

Family Membership with paper newsletter X \$40.00 = _____

New / Replacement Name Badges \$5.00 EA. # of Badges x \$5 = _____
(Make sure name/s are printed legibly below)

Total \$ _____

Checks payable to: Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society (FCSS)
Mail to: FCSS – 12307 Gleason Dr Madera, CA 93636

INFORMATION FOR CLUB USE ONLY: Check here if you don't want your information available on the internet

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Check if Change

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Phone _____

Email _____

Birthday(s) Optional – Month & Day _____

The club publishes an annual Roster containing all current members' information as shown above and distributes it to club members. If you do not want some of your information published in the Roster let us know.

I am interested in helping out in the following areas. Please contact me.

- Show & Sale Programs Library Publicity Technology
- Refreshments Hospitality Sunshine Special Events

How do you wish to receive your Newsletter, "Cactus Corner"? E-mail or US Mail

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UPDATED 09/20