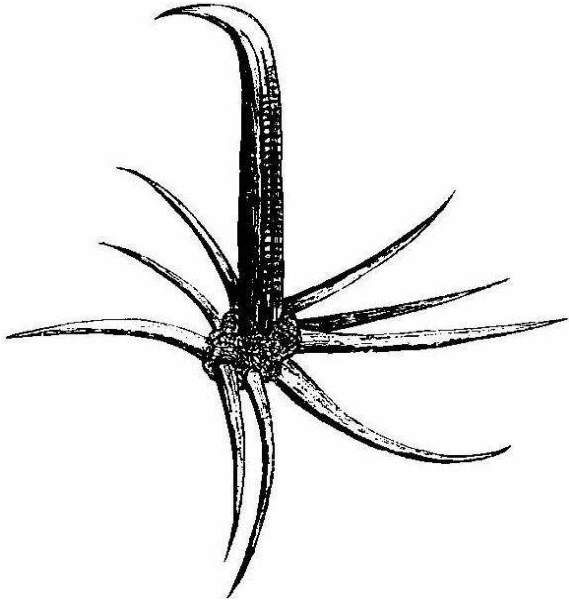


# Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

<http://www.centralarizonacactus.org>



## How to Grow Cactus and Succulents and Membership Information

An affiliate of the  
Cactus and Succulent Society of America

<http://www.cssainc.org>

Brochure version May 2004

## What is a succulent? A cactus?

Any plant that stores water for times of drought can be called a **succulent**. There are many succulents in many plant families, including the cactus, daisy, geranium, and lily families.

The **cactus family** can be distinguished from other plant families by the **areole**. This is the felty dot from which come spines, hairs, flowers, or new growths. Look at the image of a saguaro areole on the front of this leaflet; you will see that the spines come from a felty pad. Other plants may have spines but they will not have areoles. If it doesn't have areoles, it's not a cactus.

Incidentally, not all succulents are from blazing deserts; some are from wet rain forests. Some grow in areas with freezing winters, covered by snow. Some grow on the highest, coldest mountain peaks of South Africa and the Americas, and some in areas that have never seen recorded rain--just fog and dew.

## General Culture

Almost all succulents, including cacti, do well in our climate with morning sun or dappled sun, fast-draining soil, and watering once a week all year. Be sure the soil is completely soaked when you water.

Some of the most interesting succulents come from areas with climates very different than ours. We can grow most of them here quite easily, but you must know their requirements. Our climate is hotter, colder, and drier than in most succulent-rich regions, so plants need a little extra care. Few tolerate our sun all day long. Most need extra water, especially in pots. It is actually just too hot here for some very popular succulents like the jade plant (*Crassula obovata*.) And many plants from southwestern Africa grow during the cool winter, and are dormant in our hot summer.

Ask the sales clerk how to grow your new plants. If they don't really know, and you really want the plants, be sure you get the names. There are many books and Internet resources for plant culture. You can also ask your friends in the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society how to grow the plants, or look them up in our library.

## Light and Heat

The first sign of sunburn is yellowing of the plant skin. If you move the plant into more shade, the skin will recover. If you don't, the skin will turn white, and scar permanently. South- or west-facing walls get very hot. Sun protection might mean planting where they will have some afternoon shade, or under the broken cover of a shrub or tree. Pots heat up more than does the ground. Plants in pots may need light overhead shade or careful siting to avoid hot midday and afternoon sun in the summer. Some succulents from cooler climates than ours grow in full shade here in Arizona, and some are even winter growers, needing little water or light during our long, hot summers. Many cacti do fine unprotected through our winters, but some will freeze in light frosts.

## Soil, Water, Potting

Our desert soils are ideal for most cacti and succulents. There is no need for fancy mixtures nor expensive cactus & succulent soil from the store; just dig some up from your garden. If your potting soil contains peat moss and the soil dries completely, you will not be able to rewet it. Avoid peat in soil for desert plants. Most commercially bagged cactus mixes are primarily peat moss.

When you water, soak the root ball so it is completely wet. Then let it dry. Agave and prickly pear relatives like to become bone dry before the next watering. Most other succulents do better if not allowed to dry out completely during warm weather.

Pots are made from many materials. People have grown cacti and succulents in coffee cans, styrofoam cups, beverage glasses... anything with a drainage hole. Aim for a pot and soil mix that will become bone dry throughout in about 5-7 days after a good soaking.

## Why Join the CACSS

### We love plants.

If you love plants, you'll fit right in.

### Learn about the plants you have:

Do your plants grow bigger and flower every year? They should! Tired of replacing plants? Come learn what's going wrong!

### Learn about new and different plants:

Monthly Q&A on plants. Lectures about far-away places and plants. How-to demonstrations. Want plants they don't sell at the big box? We know where to find them!

**Recent lectures:** Hedgehogs; Desert Drought; Conophytums; National Cactus Convention; Agaves; Argentina's Succulents; Richtersveld.

**Native plant rescue:** We are beginning an ongoing project to salvage native plants threatened by development. You can help.

**Silent C&S Auctions:** Purchase rare and unusual plants propagated by members.

**Annual C&S show & sale April 15-17, 2005:** The best of the best! Plants and pots for sale!

**Newsletter, Web page:** Club info, cultural info, calendar of events, more.

**New friends with common interests:** We spend time together outside meetings, too!

**C&S shopping sprees:** Organized buying trips to exotic nearby states with other plant fanatics.

### Members' open gardens

**Large library for members only:** Several hundred books, some out of print. New books all the time.

**Monthly meetings:** Last Sunday of most months, Desert Botanical Garden. Call first: 602-852-9714.

### Annual holiday potluck party

**Regular updates on the national C&S society, shows, plant offerings**

Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society  
www.centralarizonacactus.org 602-852-9714  
Cactus and Succulent Society of America  
www.cssainc.org  
Cactus Mall  
www.cactus-mall.com

# Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

## Membership Application

Name(s)

Birthdate(s) (Year optional)

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone(s)

E-mail address, URL

Favorite plants

Membership is by calendar year. Annual dues \$20 individual (1 newsletter, 1 vote), \$25 household (1 newsletter, 1 vote per member); 1/2 price paid August-December.

Make checks payable to and mail to:  
CACSS, PO Box 63572, Phoenix, AZ  
85082-3572. More info: 602-852-9714.