

The Prickly Press

Newsletter of The Kansas City Cactus & Succulent Society

kccactus.com

September 2025



JOIN US FOR A FABULOUSLY FUN MEETING!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 1:30 p.m.

The Trailside Center, 99th and Holmes

FIRST — An informative roundtable discussion about bringing plants inside for the winter. What questions do you have for other members? Do you have any helpful tips to share?

AND AFTER THAT —

It's our annual PLANT GIVEAWAY, plus a SALE of members' plants to other members! This will not be open to the public — it's just for our group. It's a great chance to give away or sell some of the plants you don't have space for or have gotten tired of. And it's also an opportunity to try growing something new or to otherwise add to your collection.

If you don't have any plants you want to part with, no worries! Feel free to come and get something new to take home and love!

Be sure to bring CASH and/or a CHECKBOOK! If you have smaller bills available, bring them! Making change can be a problem!



President's Message, September 2025

I'm going to write this President's Message, then I'm going to look through my plants for something that YOU would like to take home from our ANNUAL PLANT SWAP AND SALE. I have a limited number of Dorstenia and Bowiea starters I'll be bringing. I hope you will bring a few plants and take a few plants. This meeting is especially nice since we have time for smaller group conversations, and we learn so much.

I missed seeing everyone at the last meeting. It sounded like a great program. Thanks, Mary Lynn and Victor! Thanks to Shirley, Barb, Sandy, and Eva for their quick work in making this program change. It should be lots of fun!

See you on the 21st at Trailside Center.

Linda



SOME GUIDELINES FOR SALE PLANTS AND FREEBIES

All plants should be healthy, pest-free, and reasonably clean.

Identify plants with scientific name, if known. This is especially important for sale plants.

There will be separate tables for free plants and sale plants. Please be sure to put your plants in the right place!

DO NOT take any plants from the sale or giveaway areas until after the program. If everybody starts shopping at the same time, it's more fair.

There is no limit to the number of plants you can bring, but please be reasonable. Our space is somewhat limited!

Anybody can take home any number of free plants — no need to have brought any.

It's fine to bring pots, saucers, top dressing, etc.

A limited number of non-succulent plants is okay to bring, especially as giveaways.

Any plants you bring that are not sold or adopted should be taken back home with you (or thrown in the dumpster)!

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR SALE PLANTS

Each sale plant should have a piece of paper attached or placed with it that has the following:

Plant name, price, your name, methods of payment you can accept (cash, check, Venmo, PayPal, etc.)

If you are accepting cash, try to bring smaller bills to use as change.

Sellers get to keep 100% of their sales — please collect payments directly from buyers.

**TREASURER'S REPORT
AUGUST 2025**

Beginning Balance - \$14,882.97

Income - \$0.00

Expenses - \$3,445.20 - Checks from
Sale & Show

Ending Balance - \$11,437.77

KCCSS 2025 Calendar

September 21 — 1:30, Trailside Ctr, Plant
giveaway and sale for members only
October 19 — Visit Larry's Nursery, Riverside
November 16 — Plants that are "challenged"
December 21 — Holiday Potluck and Party

Unless otherwise noted, meetings will be held at
The Trailside Center, 9901 Holmes Road. We
usually start at 1:30 and end about 4:00.

Minutes July 20

Treasurer's report:

Beginning 12,199.96
Income 7,919.41
Expenses 2,123.80
Ending 17,995.57

Web Administrator: No report

OLD BUSINESS

T-Shirt photo contest — Shirley is communicating with
t-shirt company. 50th anniversary , 2026. Can choose style / color. \$20-25.

NEW BUSINESS

August meeting at Gress home. 3-D printing demonstration. Mary Lynn gave out maps. There's a pool, so bring suit and towel, also appetizers to share; bring a drink.

SHOW AND SALE

Mary Lynn — will organize duties (?)
for next year
Renee thanked for good job as chair this year.

Elks Club is good venue — space for parking
Greeter important.
Saturday lunch
Need water available
Early member sales
Novice/advanced classes — okay to combine
Friendly, education offered; enjoyable

Register — difficult/errors
Membership — single/family
credit card fees — how to handle— pass on or absorb
by club? check with other clubs
outdoor signs need bigger easy to read — fewer
need chairs

Mentor new people for show
Plant of the month — time to show what to expect
Explain why — winners
Meeting on judging / staging plants

Have carts available for set up / break down
Kay Trieb, acting secretary

Letter from the CSSA in response to the club donation in memory of John Selfridge.



The Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc.

September 2, 2025

Kansas City Cactus & Succulent Society
863 Northwest 1101st Road
Odessa, MO 64076

Dear Kansas City Cactus & Succulent Society,

On behalf of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc. (CSSA), thank you for your thoughtful contribution of \$50 to our Research Fund in honor of your former member, John Selfridge.

Your gift not only supports vital research on cacti and succulents but also pays tribute to John's connection to these remarkable plants and the community that cherishes them. Contributions like yours strengthen our mission and help ensure that the knowledge, appreciation, and conservation of these plants continue to grow.

We will be honored to recognize your donation in the annual donor acknowledgment section of *To The Point*. If you would prefer a different form of acknowledgment, please let us know.

Thank you again for your generosity and for honoring John in such a meaningful way. Your support makes a difference to CSSA and to all who benefit from our programs and initiatives.

With deepest appreciation,

Julie Weber
Business Manager

John Selfridge Memorial Service

Sunday, September 21, 2025
2:00 - 4:00 pm (Central time)
Irvin-Parkview Funeral Home
1317 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502

The T-Shirts! Hooray!

Shirley Grubbs, chair of the t-shirt committee, reports the following:

We have the mockup of our T-shirt ready to go. There are a couple of things I want to do differently on it such as put the 2026 and 50th anniversary on the sleeve by our logo. And then the name of the plant under the image on the front. But I didn't have enough time to work with them on that final suggestion.

As soon as the committee approves the mockup, we can start taking orders, so that will be later this month. The deadline will be our October meeting on October 19. This is so we have time for them to get printed and delivered before Christmas.

These shirts could be a great Christmas present!

There will be other colors available than the ones pictured.





BOWIEA VOLUBILIS

Bowiea volubilis is a southern Africa succulent that looks somewhat like a green onion. It's a large, exposed, scaly bulb which produces slender, twining, leafless green stems and small greenish white flowers. It thrives in arid regions of eastern Africa, Uganda to South Africa. The generic name honors James Bowie, a 19th century plant collector for the Royal Botanic Garden Kew.

Cultivation is not difficult. Supposedly the plant has dormant periods, but if you keep watering it, it will produce green stems all year around. It's best to train the stems on a support of some kind, otherwise they will scramble over and among neighboring plants and you will have to untangle them. Propagation is fairly easy. The bulb will produce offsets or sometimes bulblets grow on the old bulbs. They can be detached to grow on their own. It can also be grown from seed. A local grower, who waters all year around, has a lush plant that is currently blooming heavily and setting seed. In habitat, the bulb is pollinated by flies, but it seems plants in cultivation can be self-pollinated by a good breeze or even by having someone brush against them.

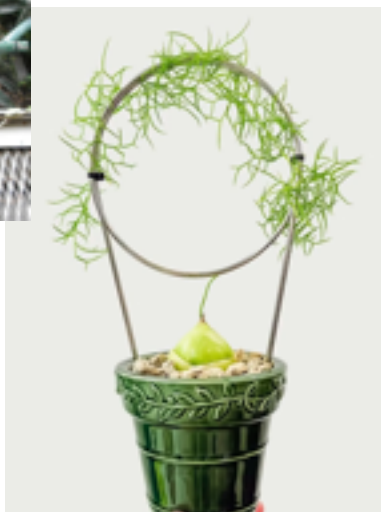
The "Climbing Onion" isn't an onion, so don't eat it. All parts of the plant are said to be poisonous. There is only one species of *Bowiea*. The latest revision splits the genus into two subspecies: *B. volubilis ssp volubilis* and *volubilis ssp gariepensis*. The later is sometimes listed as a separate species.

At Henrietta's Nursery (of fond memory) they had a bowiea growing in the ground under a cactus bench. It was huge, the bulbs easily 8 inches in diameter, the stems reaching up to the roof. That shows you can grow this plant anywhere. (Photo from www.lilife.com) Sue

Article by Sue Haffner, published in the January 2025 issue of Cactus Corner News, Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society.



Both of these photos were posted on Etsy. What is for sale is a packet of seeds, not the whole plant.



The Kansas City Cactus & Succulent Society, Inc. was established in 1976. It is incorporated as a Non-Profit Organization in Missouri. The Society is affiliated with The Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc. Meetings are generally held at 1:30 p.m. on the 3rd Sunday of each month at the Trailside Center, 99th & Holmes. Dues are \$20 for a single membership and \$25 for a household. **OFFICERS:** **President** — Linda Tamblyn, **Co-Vice Presidents** — Shirley Grubbs, Barbara Roy, **Secretary** — Doris Duke, **Treasurer** — Christy Sipek, **Newsletter Editor** — Eva Allen, **Website Administrator** — Victor Gress, **KCCSS Publicity and CSSA Affiliate Representative** — Mark Raduziner,

SUCCULENT GERANIUMS

We are all familiar with geraniums, those attractive blooming hybrid pelargoniums grown either in pots or in the garden. The generic name *Pelargonium*, comes from the Greek *pelargos* ("stork") for the ripening fruits and their resemblance to a stork's beak. Species native to the drylands of southern Africa, though, have undergone unusual transformations. Some have become stem succulents; others form caudexes; some have formed bulbous roots; a few can even be said to have become leaf succulents.

The flowers of these species are much smaller and less colorful than those of the hybrids but can be appreciated for the subtlety of color and form they exhibit. The plants make up for any outward lack of showiness in the strangeness of their appearance. Most of the succulent geranium are fairly adaptable to different climates and cultural conditions. Most bloom and set seed in cultivation. The relatively large seeds employ a unique dispersal method. Each flower produces five seeds which are aided in their escape by splitting of the style into five stringy strands (awns), each equipped with a parachute that carries the seeds a way on the wind. Once on the ground, the seed is "screwed" into the soil by the awn, which twists in response to changes in air humidity: Here are a few species that are popular with growers:



Pelargonium alternans (the specific name is from Latin, referring to the alternately arranged leaflets) is a succulent shrublet with small, hairy leaves. It is native to the dry western and southern parts of the southwest Cape Province, where it can be found growing in rocky areas. Despite being from a winter rainfall area, it blooms throughout the year, from April to January. The flowers are light pink. It would make a good bonsai subject. (Photo: www.lilifle.com)



Pelargonium hystrix (its name is from the Greek for "porcupine", referring to the persistent stipules on the stems) is a real collector's plant. It is a rare species, found in several locations in the western Karoo. This area suffers blistering hot summers and frost in the winter, when most of the about ten inches of rainfall is produced. It blooms in October and November, after which the leaves die and the plants remain dormant until spring. The flowers are white to cream colored with red markings. It forms a small caudex. (Photo: www.ebay.com)



Pelargonium klinghardtense is named for the Klinghardt Mountains in southern Namibia where it was first discovered. It is a stem succulent, branched mostly from the base, with characteristic large succulent leaves and greenish flowers. Its habitat is a winter rainfall area, which means it is a summer grower for us. It should be kept dry and frost free in winter.

The photo shows a dormant plant in habitat. (www.lilifle.com)

Make a New Years resolution to try growing some new plant varieties this year. Maybe you could start with a pelargonium.

Sue

Pelargonium xerophyton is a caudiciform member of the large and varied genus *Pelargonium*. This means that it has thick branched succulent stems that retain water, a survival feature in its arid habitat. It forms a tiny gnarled tree shape with very small fleshy leaves that can be trimmed to suit taste. It has white, usually solitary flowers, the upper petals are narrow with a crimson blotch.



Plant Desert. plantdesert.com