

Pests

Many cactus and succulent plants are resistant to a lot of common garden pests. The usual pests encountered are mealy bugs, scale, and spider mites. Most are easily controlled by chemical or natural pesticides available from your local garden supply. Be sure to use these strictly according to instructions.

Additional Information

More specific information can easily be found by contacting local or national succulent plant societies, arboretums, botanical gardens, the internet or your public library.

About Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society

We are a non-profit organization founded in 1973 out of an interest group developed during the Fullerton Arboretum's first ever Green Scene. We are also the local affiliate of the national Cactus and Succulent Society of America.

Our charter is to stimulate interest in the culture, propagation and preservation of cactus and succulent plants. We do this by providing a forum for sharing this interest and providing fellowship with other enthusiasts.

Regular meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month (November and December's meetings are combined and usually held the 2nd Thursday of December).

Meeting location is the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 11832 Euclid Ave. Garden Grove, CA. Visitors are always welcome.

Meetings feature presentations or workshops by experts on all aspects of our hobby including propagation, culture, research, education, and travel to interesting plant habitats world wide. Refreshments are served. There is also a plant raffle, sales of plants and supplies, and a discussion table for plants brought in by members to get help on culture or identification or to just plain show and tell.

In addition to sharing in the combined knowledge and experience of our group, members receive a monthly newsletter, have access to our large library of cactus and succulent books and will be able to participate in club activities such as our annual Show & Sale, Green Scene(of course), field trips, garden tours, grower visits and other special events.

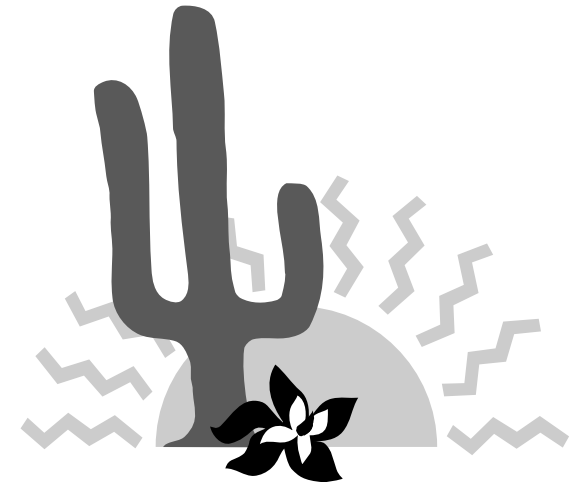
For more information or to join OCCSS:

Come to a meeting
Guests are always welcome!

Or Call:
(714) 870-4887
(714) 637-8192

Or visit our web site:
www.occss.org

Cactus and Succulent Care



Orange County Cactus and Succulent Society

What are Cactus and Succulents?

They are plants that have evolved or developed characteristics that allow them to survive infrequent or minimal amounts of water. Sometimes surviving months of drought, or moisture that arrives only as fog or dew. This adaptation always includes a method of storing and preserving water for lean times. This usually consists of thickened, fleshy (succulent) stems, roots or leaves. Plants exhibiting the characteristics are termed succulent. Succulents occur in many plant families and are found naturally in the xeric or desert regions of the world. Members of the Cactus family are the most recognizable to most people but other common succulents such as Agave, Aloes, Euphorbias and Mesembs (iceplant) are visible in parks and landscapes all over Orange County.

To answer a common question: All cactus are succulent but not all succulents are cactus.

There are also many lesser known succulent plants, where the combination of striking physical form, outstanding blooms and general ease of maintenance make them desirable as landscape or pot collectibles.

Basic Care

In common with all plants, succulents require the basics of water and light. Because of their abilities to survive adverse conditions such as infrequent water and extreme heat, they are much less fussy about both than other plant groups. The best culture comes from careful observation of your plants responses. As you get

to know your plants, you will be able to easily tell when they need water, more or less light, etc.

Watering

Remember that cactus and succulent plants are used to infrequent water and are water thrifty by nature. They still require water, but less frequently than the ordinary leafy house plant. When you water, it is best to flood or soak thoroughly until water runs freely from the bottom of the pot. Don't water again until the soil mix is almost dry. Use a water meter or bamboo skewer to check that the mix is dry at least 2/3 the way down. Water less frequently when the plant is resting or dormant (usually in Winter). In almost all cases, succulents do better with under-watering than over.

Light

Most succulent plants need strong light to develop the best forms, distinctive colors, and flowers. Most can take full sun for at least a few hours a day but others, especially greenhouse grown seedlings, can quickly sunburn in our mid-day summer sun. Start your new plants in filtered light and move them gradually into more light as you watch for signs of sunburn and excess pot heat that can cause damage. Very few succulents do well in subdued light.

Ventilation

Cactus and succulent plants require good ventilation, with lots of moving, fresh air preferred. Don't expect them to survive in terrariums or stuffy rooms.

Soil Mixes

The primary soil requirement for most succulents is that the mix be extremely friable and quick draining so that roots always have a good supply of air and do not sit in water. A good basic mix will consist of 1/2 porous material (horticultural pumice, Perlite, or decomposed granite) and 1/2 organic material (Supersoil, composted fir or redwood, coir, or a commercial planter mix).

Containers

Pots or other containers for succulents must have lots of drainage holes, or at least, one large one. There must be free drainage of water and access to air. Don't use saucers or other containers where the pot may sit in water. Wet feet are OK for palms or ferns but not succulents. For the beginner, unglazed red clay or terra cotta pots are probably the best. Plastic grower pots and glazed stoneware pots are also excellent but will require a little more attention to watering. Generally, you should select the smallest container that seems appropriate for the plants size and shape. Usually, a pot 1-2 inch greater in diameter than the plant is adequate.

Fertilizing

Succulent plants do best with a balanced or low nitrogen fertilizer applied at very low strength with each watering. A 15-15-15 balanced fertilizer at 1/4 the recommended rate is a good place to start. Common house plant fertilizers such as Schultz Liquid or Peters Professional, again, at 1/4 the recommended rate, normally give good results.