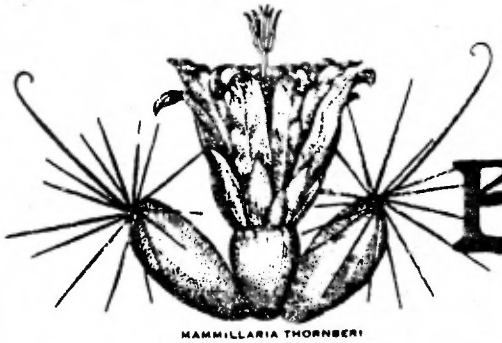

Espinas y Flores

BULLETIN OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
Affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc.

Vol. XVI, No. 1 January 1981

January Meeting

Saturday, January 10, 1981
1:30 pm
Casa del Prado, Room 101, Balboa Park

A Panel Discussion on Culture of Cacti & Succulents

The January program will feature a panel of expert cactus & succulent growers to answer all questions concerning the culture of these plants. Come prepared to put them to the test. This is our opportunity to clear up those puzzling problems we have encountered.

In This Issue . . . . . Page

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY

SARCOCAULON (sarcos-'fleshy' and caulis - 'branch')

This member of the family Geraniaceae, is a fleshy, spiny shrublet with a unique wax impregnated bark. The "bushman candle" grows in cracks and sandy places, among rocks, in dry localities and more arid areas from Cape Province to Angola in Africa.

Varying in size from a few inches to about two feet tall the fourteen species grow in open spaces and are leafless most of the year. The petioles of the kidney shaped leaves remain as spines and water loss is prevented by the waxy bark. The pale yellow, pink or reddish flowers are large for the plant and look as if made of thin crepe paper.

This very desirable plant is dormant during our summer and grows in fall and winter. Water should be withheld during the dormant period as these plants are highly adapted to long dry periods and rot easily if watered 'out of season' or planted in poor draining soil.

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PELARGONIUM (pelargo - 'stork')

Another member of the Geraniaceae, this large genus of 200 species plus uncountable hybrids is from temperate and sub-tropical areas in South and South West Africa. The shrubs or sub-shrubs have white to red flowers and, in the more succulent species, thick branches and/or tuberous roots. The growth forms are very diverse and the leaves vary from almost round to very frilly.

The plants grow in autumn and winter and should be kept on the dry side during spring and summer. They enjoy full sun and well drained soil

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For more information refer to;

Pelargoniums of Southern Africa, by J.J.A.van der Walt
Succulents of Southern Africa, by B. P. Barkhuizen
Bothalia, Vol.12, #4, June 1979 ; The Genus Sarcocaulon, by R.O. Moffett

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SUCCULENTS OF THE MONTH FOR 1981

Jan.	Pelargonium & Sarcocaulon	July	Picnic
Feb.	Othonna & Senecio	Aug.	Dorstenia & Ficus
March	Ceraria & Talinum & Anacampseros	Sept.	Cotyledon & Adromischus
April	Bulbine & Gasteria & Bowiea	Oct.	Jatropha & Monadenium
May	Didierea & Alluaudia & Decaryia	Nov.	Sansevieria
June	Adenium & Pachypodium	Dec.	Christmas Party

Cactus-of-the-Month

Borzicactus Riccobono

Frank C. Thrombley

Borzicactus (bôrt-sē-kăk′-tŭs)
Group: Loxanthocerei Backeberg

This genus of cactus was originally taken to include only certain columnar species from Ecuador, Peru and Chile. A number of related cactus is now referred to Borzicactus by some American and English authors. The following is a list which was placed into the genus Borzicactus by these authors: Akersia, Areguipa, Bolivicereus, Clistanthocereus, Hildewintera, Loxanthocereus, Matucana, Submatucana and Seticereus. For this article, however, we will stay with Backebergs theory and descriptions.

Backeberg listed six species and all of them are from Ecuador. Borg lists nine species, two of them, Borzicactus faustianus and jajoianus, was described by Backberg. However, Backberg places these two in Loxanthocereus. Britton and Rose listed eight species only two of which stayed in Backberg's listing and so there is some confusion.

January's Cactus-of-the-Month was first described by Riccobono in 1909. It was named in honor of Professor Antonio Borzi, director of the Botanical Garden of Palermo, Italy. The first plant was raised from seed received from Ecuador, at the gardens of La Mortola, Ventimiglia. Riccobono described and named the plant Borzicactus ventimiglia which became the type species by Britton and Rose.

Borzicactus are erect cerei, only moderately stout or rather slender. They attain a height of 4 to 5 feet, with the ribs rounded, in part transversely notched or thickened around the areoles. The flowers are zygomorphic and are red to carmine color and in my opinion very pretty. The fruit is green with small black seeds. The color of the spines are light to dark brown and golden yellow in one specie, Borzicactus websterianus. Borzicactus websterianus var., Rufispinus, however, has reddish brown spines.

All of the Borzicactus listed by Backeberg are found in habitat on the upland Andean plateau basins of Ecuador. This narrow plateau lies between the crests of two mountain chains in the Andes. The plateau runs from north to south and ranges from 9,500 feet elevation in the north to 2,500 feet elevation in the south. The Borzicactus species are found throughout this range. Borzicactus Aeguatorialis is found on the equator at the 9500 foot level and Borzicactus pseudothelegonus is found in the vicinity of Giron Pasaje at the 2500 foot level.

The mountain peaks surrounding this plateau are between 15,000 and 20,500 feet elevation with many of them being cones of volcanoes. This plateau of many basins is deeply mantled with lava and volcanic ash ejected during past eruptions. The air is generally cool in these basins, ranging from an average

of 50°F at the equator to an average of 70°F in the more southerly areas. Rainfall in the basins is derived from daily showers, bringing between 30 and 60 inches of rain per year. The porous volcanic soils considerably lessen the effectiveness of the rainfall by rapidly absorbing all surface moisture. Frosts are ever-present also, due to high elevations, thin air and falling temperatures at night.

Cultivation of these plants should not be difficult. Potted in an open compost they will take water, full sun and frost. Planted in a gritty, well drained soil in our garden in Southern California, they should take all of the elements with no adverse effects.

References used:

Backeberg, Curt. 1977 Cactus Lexicon. Blandford Press, England

Borg, J. 1976 Cacti. Blandford Press, England

Britton & Rose. 1937 The Cactaceae. Dover Publication, N.Y.C.

1966 Collier's Encyclopedia. Crowell Collier & Macmillan, Inc.

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Membership Renewals

If you haven't already done so, now is the time to renew your membership. The cost of a single or family membership is $7.00 for 1981. The treasurer will accept dues at the January meeting in the following manner: place your check or money ($7.00), along with your name, address and phone number, in a sealed envelope and give to the treasurer. Or you may mail your payment - with your, address and phone number to:

Joan Johnson
3599 Via Zara
Fallbrook, CA 92028

Dues not received by January 20, 1981 will be considered delinquent and membership privileges expired. Those individuals with library fines of $1.00 or more will be required to pay that added amount with their membership dues.

CSSA Notes

The following election results were announced at the December 6, 1980, Board Meeting:

President:	Kathryn Sabo	Directors:	Lyman Benson
V. - Pres:	Leroy Phelps		W. Hubert Earle
Rec. Secy:	Beverly Kirkegaard		Gary W. Lyons
Treasurer:	Virginia Shambeau		

In addition, it was reported that Gary Lyons has resigned from the Board.

Board Meetings for 1981 have been scheduled for the following dates:

January 24, 1981
June 4, 1981
(Convention in Albuquerque, N.M.)
July 4
(Annual Meeting)
September 5, 1981
December 5, 1981

CSSA Membership & Journal

Many of our members may not realize that the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society is an Affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc. Persons, who wish to join, can become a member of this National Society and receive a beautifully produced and superior bimonthly journal that is fully illustrated containing numerous articles on the following: Cactus and other succulents of the world, cultural hints, conservation, CSSA news, views, elections, conventions, expeditions, new species, shows, etc. This journal also lists new and old books for sale plus a partial inventory of wholesale, retail and mail order nurseries is given. Annual subscription with membership included is $15.00. Remit to: Abbey Garden Press, Box 3010, Santa Barbara, California 93105.

CSSA Library

Virginia F. Martin with the assistance of Gordon and Sylvia McTavish has compiled a complete listing of books in the Cactus & Succulent Society, Inc., Library. These volumes are housed at the Warden Library, Whittier College, Whittier, California.

There are many rare, out of print editions on cacti & other succulents and connected interests plus numerous up to date volumes. It should be noted that many of these works were donated by fellow members.

Members of CSSA may visit the library and use the various volumes for research. The library is open to visitors from 8:00 am - 11:00 pm, Monday through Thursday; 8:00 am - 7:00 pm Friday; 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Saturday and 1:00 pm - 10:00 pm Sunday. All books, journals and other publications are on reserve and can not be taken out of the library. The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society library has a complete listing of these volumes for member use.

Member Interviews: Wilna Johnson

by Marcia Monroe

Wilna was born in the state of Alabama but she also lived in Virginia for a few years; she attended and graduated from Birmingham Business College. Subsequently, she worked for the Navy Department as an accountant. Her husband, John, is a retired chief signalman in the United States Navy and at the present time, he is a Postmaster with the U.S. Postal Service. The Johnsons have two daughters and a three year old grandson. Wilna and John have a small mobile home in Potrero but most of the time they live in Chula Vista, California.

For several years Wilna collected the very colorful geranium species; then eight years ago she became interested in the succulent varieties. Hopefully, in the near future, she will be taking a trip to South Africa where she can collect seed and see some of these plants in their natural habitat.

Wilna joined our Club six years ago and she is also a member of CSSA. She is a member and a past Secretary for the San Diego Geranium Society. Too, she is a Vice-President and a member of the Board for the International Geranium Society.

Winning numerous awards, she has exhibited her geraniums at different Geranium shows throughout Southern California, at Garden Club shows and at the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society's Annual Show. In addition, Wilna is Secretary for the Southwestern Group of Judges Council and she is an accredited judge (judging at the Geranium shows, at the Standard flower shows sponsored by the Garden Clubs, at Rose shows and at other specialties).

Her speciality are the succulent geraniums: Pelargonium lobatum, P. x ardens and P. xerophyton, among others, from South Africa.

Taking classes in the different colleges, she enjoys gardening classes the most. Especially at Long Beach State (where the crash courses are held), after one more course, she hopes to get her Gardening Consultant Certificate. She feels that it is her duty to keep herself up to date with new methods, etc. She takes classes whenever possible, and she has missed getting her baccalaureate degree but in those early days when a student took business in high school, they were expected to attend Business College.

Wilna enjoys corresponding with people from other countries who have the same interest. "How exciting it is to receive seeds of plants that you have never seen! Using a loose medium with a good drainage system, I also like to find out other methods of growing".

Cactus Culture for the Amature Collector

F. C. Thrombley

Part II: Containers and Water

Plant Container: The container is also a part of the soil; its nature is essential to success. The act of confining a cactus in a small pot is a radical departure from its normal way of life, where roots spread widely and seek the shelter and moisture of rock crevices.

Cactus can be grown in many different containers; clay pots, tin cans, wooden boxes, glazed pots or dishes and plastic pots. Pots are the most common containers used and so we will discuss them only.

Porous clay pots allow quick drying out and - if exposed to prolonged hot sun - scorching and death of the fine roots. To understand this, one must consider the relation between root and soil. The growing root attaches itself by means of hundreds of very fine root hairs, so closely to the soil particles that it seems almost as if united to them. Only in this way can the root absorb the thin layer of water which surrounds the particles of soil. Now if the soil dries out, its volume is reduced. This reduction in volume produces a tension which tears the root hairs apart and sometimes the very young roots too. The porous pot is continually drawing from the soil, water which evaporates from its surface. Further, nutritive salts also are constantly being drawn up from the soil in the pot, and, by continual watering, the soil becomes more and more leached. The advantage for the amature, however, is because the pot is porous. Unless we have a planned schedule we have a tendency to over water and lose plants to rotted roots. For those of us who live in the fog belt on the coast or where there is a great deal of overcast, I would certainly recommend clay porous pots. The exception to this recommendation would be pots under the 4" size. They dry out too fast and the cactus planted in them requires careful treatment.

Glazed or plastic pots, not being porous, do not have the disadvantages just described for the clay pot. One must remember, however, that most terrestrial cactus are especially sensitive to excessive moisture. Plants in these pots must be watered with more care because the moisture cannot escape from their sides. Glazed pots are usually selected for their decorative appearance. Plastic pots, also non-porous, are often used because they are light weight, inexpensive and come in a number of colors.

Consider the size of the pot in relation to the size of the plant being grown. Not only does a small plant look lost in a large pot, it rarely will survive. Unused soil generally becomes waterlogged and leads to rotting of the plants roots. Conversely, you cannot expect a large plant to respond in a tiny pot. Generally, for round or spherical plants use a pot one or two inches wider than the diameter of the plant. For vertical specimens choose a pot half as wide as the plant is tall.

Clean all pots before planting to be sure they are free of dirt and possible insect eggs. All pots must have drainage holes in the bottom. If you have a decorative container with no drainage hole you can plant the cactus in a clay pot which will fit inside the more attractive container. When potting, cover the drainage holes with broken sections of clay pots, screening or clean stones to prevent the compost from washing away. With plastic pots, it is a good idea to add extra stones or broken crocks to add weight to the bottom to help prevent the lightweight pot from tipping over with your prized cactus planted in it. When adding the compost, do not compress it around the plant with your thumb or fingers. Instead, gently tap the pot on the potting bench to "settle" the compost into the voids about the roots. Never fill the pot so that the compost covers the original soil line of the plant. It is best to leave at least a half inch or more below the base of the plant, this space can then be filled with decorative gravel so that the base of the plant is not in contact with the soil. Remember cactus are especially sensitive to excessive moisture and this is certainly true at its base.

Watering: Many factors govern the watering schedule for cactus; the type of soil, the kind of pot, the climate, the plant itself.

To say that cacti need "no water" or "little water" is nonsense. During the growing period they need water and like being dried as little as do other plants. If water is available to a cactus in its native land, then it grows, if there is none, then it goes to rest, at any period of the year. While all cacti, during the growing period, want a uniformly moist soil, a few genera and species are particularly sensitive to continual dampness, especially in cooler weather. Among these are the species from lower California; those from the coast of Chile, on the other hand, are very resistant to damp conditions. It is, therefore, impossible to lay down hard and fast rules about watering.

I started to collect cactus in the spring of 1976 and during the past four years have kept a file on each plant as I acquired them. During the first two years I used a moisture meter to probe the soil to determine when to water and logged this in the file. During this same two year period a compost mix was prepared which suited my needs. The knowledge gained from this led to the practice of watering my plants on a weekly, bi-weekly and monthly schedule, depending on the size and type of pot. I live in the Escondido area and so I would not recommend my watering schedule for one who lives on the coast. In the Escondido area we are hotter in the summer and colder in the winter months, with less dampness year around. As a side note I would add that using the moisture meter probe played havoc with the root ball of my plants. As a general rule for the beginner use a compost that drains immediately, this means that the water does not lie on the top of the pot for more than 30 seconds, preferably less. When watering be sure that the water is draining out through the bottom drain holes before you stop pouring water in the top. If air bubbles rise to the top of the pot while watering, continue until the bubbles stop. Never let your pots sit in water after watering. This could happen when you would place a potted plant inside another container that has no drainage hole. In the Southern California foothills to the coastal areas there are many micro-climates. We should establish a watering program for ourselves based on our area through trying and observing.

Remember that the compost, container and water are dependent on each other for healthy growth. Do not be afraid to experiment, that is the joy of learning. Ask questions at the Society meetings; the more advanced grower is always willing to help. We should avail ourselves to the Society library and learn more about our plants habitat. By participating we learn "the common sense techniques" which is a subject for another time. GOOD LUCK!

References used:

Buxbaum, Franz 1958 Cactus Culture Based on Biology, Blandford Press, London

Rowley, Gordon 1978 The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Succulents Crown Publishers, Inc., New York

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Cactus Wren--Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus

CACTUS WREN

Some nesting desert birds have no dread for the Cylindropunti cacti, well-known for their persistant, clinging spines. In the branches of a large cholla clump, the Cactus Wren's nest is protected by prickley spines.

If one has the time, they should take a drive on one of the many desert roads to view this brown-bodied bird, with white tips on its tail, feeding and hopping on the ground near a sheltering cactus patch. Frequently a Cactus Wren can be seen perched at the apex of a yucca or cactus plant displaying the dark streaks that join to shape a sizeable band on its breast.

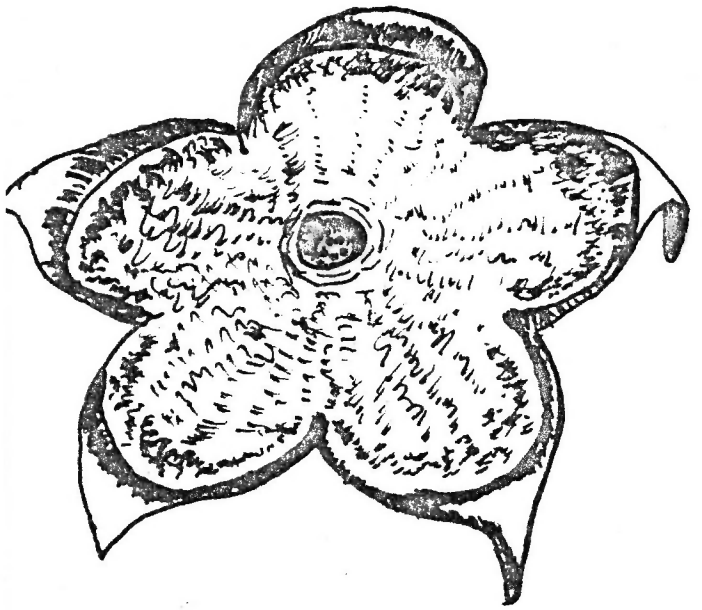
Distribution is as follows: Desert of Southern California, near San Diego, north in dry washes along the coast to Los Angeles County and east of the mountains to Owens Valley. (Range may be wider than the above)

Reference:

Robbins, C.S.; Bruun, B. & Herbert S. Zim. 1966. Birds of North America. Page 224.

Hoffmann, Ralph. 1927. Birds of the Pacific States. Pages 240-241.

Edithcolea grandis N.E. Br.



Questions: 1. Edithcolea grandis is a member of what family and tribe? 2. Who discovered this succulent? It was discovered in what year? 3. Who named the plant Edithcolea grandis? 4. What is the distribution of this species? 5. What species is conspecific or synonymous with E. grandis? 6. Is this species a prolific bloomer in cultivation? 7. Is E. grandis a perennial succulent herb? 8. Give a general description of the following: a.plant b.stem c. flower. 9. What is the variety of E. grandis? 10. What is its type locality? 11. Should E. grandis and its variety have a well-drained compost?

Answers: 1. Family (Asclepiadaceae) and tribe (Stapelieae). 2. Miss Edith Cole about 1895. 3. Dr. Nicholas Edward Brown=Edithcolea grandis N.E. Br.. 4. Ethiopia, Somalia, Socotra, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. 5. Edithcolea sordida. 6. The amount of light that it receives may be a factor, but for now no one is able to determine a physiological explanation for its poor blooming quality in cultivation. 7. Yes. Somali boys chewed the leaves. 8. a. plant: a glabrous leafless perennial herb with stems branching freely, decumbent & trailing along the ground. b. stems: tiny undeveloped leaves that harden into permanent spine-like teeth at the angles of the stems. c. flower: the corolla is flattish or saucer-shape and 10-12.5 cm. in diameter; inward, deep maroon-purple; the rest of the flower is verruculose, yellow with purple markings and bands of purple clavate hairs extending from the centre to the sinuses. Each inner corona lobe has a dilated spiny or tuberculate tip that encompasses the outside surface. 9. Edithcolea grandis var. baylissiana Lavranos & Hardy. 10. Tanzania. 11. Yes.--a 50°F greenhouse tempareture should be maintained.

Stem of E. grandis

References:

Field, D.V.. 1980. Edithcolea grandis. Asclepiadaceae, 20: Page 18.

Lavranos, J.J. & D.S. Hardy. 1980. Edithcolea grandis var. baylissiana Lavranos & Hardy. Asclepiadaceae, 20: Page 21.

White, A. & B. Sloane. 1937. The Stapelieae.I: Pages 8, 116 & 404-407.

San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Election Results

President - Rick Latimer
1st V. Pres. - Frank Thrombley
2nd V. Pres. - John Pasek
Rec. Secy. - Beverly Kirkegaard
Treasurer - Joan Johnson
Corresponding Secy. - Amna Cornett
Immediate Past Pres. - Tom Hamecher

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News of Interest

At the January meeting Calendars (approx. 15 by 20 inches) printed in Japan, with a stunning color picture of a cactus or succulent on each page, will be offered for sale by our Club for $3.50. Interested persons should contact Betty Athy at the next meeting.

Members, who are bringing in gift plants for "The Plant Exchange Table", Should name each plant or cutting whenever possible. Dirt should be removed from the roots if the plants are not potted, and plants exchanged should be in good health, free of bugs and in proper bags (plastic or paper).

A reminder that the following members have signed up to provide refreshments for the January meeting:

Eleanor Dice, Sophie Loyland, Verna Pasek, Katherine MacDonald, Phyllis Flechsig, Marcelle Thorner, John Myers, Estelle Viertel, Peg Bryant, Peggy Foret, Lydia Evans and Caroline Miller.

We need a member to come forth and write Member Interview articles each month for Espinas y Flores. One of our newer members, who enjoys meeting people and owns a typewriter, could easily fill this highly challenging position. Please contact Marcia Monroe at the next meeting.

A final note -- at all times we encourage members with exceptional expertise to come forward and volunteer to write articles and/or to give suggestions that would aid in making Espinas y Flores a better Newsletter.

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+Don't forget to pay your dues by January 20, 1981+
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==========Deadline for the February Newsletter is January 29, 1981==========

FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS

Marcia J. Monroe
5635 Severin Drive
La Mesa, California

92041

San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society

Officers

President - Rick Latimer
5990 Lake Murray Blvd., La Mesa, CA. 92041 463-1655

1st V. Pres. - Frank Thrombley
16333 Roca Drive, San Diego, CA. 92128 487-5544

2nd V. Pres - John Pasek
10283 Covina Place, San Diego, CA. 92126 271-0515

Recording Secretary - Beverly Kirkegaard
10009 Bonnie Vista, La Mesa, CA 92041 463-2801

Treasurer - Joan Johnson
3599 Via Zara, Fallbrook, CA. 92028 728-7317

Corresponding Secretary - Anna Cornett
3905 Ibis St., San Diego, CA. 92103 291-6426

Immediate Past Pres. - Tom Hamecher
996 Terrace Crest, El Cajon, CA. 92020 440-6245

Board of Directors

Elizabeth Athy, Shirley Berry, Dr. Ronald Monroe
Martin Mooney, Dr. Leroy Phelps

Committees

Activities: H. Warren Buckner
Audit: James Berry
Conservation: Dr. Ronald Monroe
Education:
Cacti - Frank Thrombley and Dr. Ronald Monroe
Succulents - Madelyn Lee and Dr. Leroy Phelps
Exhibits:
Bragging Table - Shirley Berry
V.I.P. (Very Important Plants) Table - Sandra Buck
Historian: Rick Latimer
Library: Elizabeth Athy, Ruth Nelson and Caroline Miller
Membership: Joan Johnson
Open House:
Plant Exchange Table: John Roth
Plants & Supplies Table:
Programs: Frank Thrombley
Publication: Marcia Monroe (ph. 461-8444)
Reception: Rose D'Attilio and Perlso Lewis
Regalement: Nancy Roth
Representatives:
Balboa Park Desert Garden - John Pasek
Quail Botanical Garden - Audrey Johnson
S. D. Botanical Garden Foundation -
S. D. Floral Association - Verna Pasek

The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is open to all persons interested in growing cacti, other succulents and exotic plants. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at 1:30 pm in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Board of Directors meetings are held after the general meetings. Annual dues are $7.00 per family. Single copies of Espinas y Flores are 60¢.