

MAMMILLARIA THORNERI

Espinas y Flores

NEWSLETTER of the SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY, INC.
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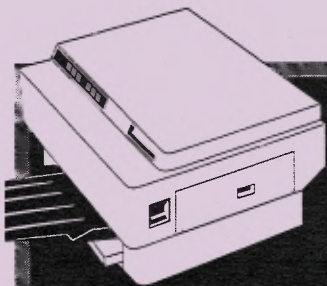
Steven Hammer - South African Bulbs Winter Mini Show Begins at 10:00 am!

Are you the proud owner of a wonderful South African bulb which is just about to bloom? Or a lovely pelargonium that is always totally dormant and leafless during the June Show? Or oxalis? Or tylecodons? Well, January 1998 is your lucky month, because we are going to have a show especially for winter blooming succulents. Our judge for this winter mini-show and our speaker — the slide show program begins @ 1:00pm — will be Mr. Steven Hammer. In 1993 Steven did a wonderful program for us, just after the publication of his exemplary monograph, *The Genus Conophytum*. He has traveled to South Africa 16 times since 1985 ostensibly to study and explore succulents, especially mesembryantheums, his first love in the vegetable world.

Recently named a CSSA Fellow for his numerous articles and contributions to the American society, Steve has described many new taxa and recombinations and has at least 50 new taxonomical species in personal cultivation that he is presently working on. A couple of months ago Steven moved here to San Diego County - Vista from his former dwelling in Belen, New Mexico. He has brought with him the very infectious Sphaeroidamania which we understand he has already been spreading throughout the North County! San Diego will be much richer for Steve's passion for these diminutive cryptic plants. Join us for this very special event!

Our cover: Hook you dreams to a star in 1998! And display your stars, like this wonderful *Orostachys (Sedum) spinosum* in this month's Winter Mini-Show!!! The original photograph (which was scissored by Michael into a spacial iconology) was taken by J.R. Brown.

Please send your letters, artwork, poetry, Cactus or Succulent-of-the-Month articles, puzzles, comments, or criticisms, etc. to:



MICHAEL & JOYCE BUCKNER, EDITORS
4822 SANTA MONICA AVENUE, #103
SAN DIEGO, CA 92107
PHONE OR FAX: (619) 222-3216

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Contributors to the Anza-Borrego Land Acquisition: Elizabeth Athy, *The Carizma Foundation* - Abraham Blank, *CMR* - Chris Clayton, Merritt S. Dunlap - *In Appreciation of all the work done by Stan Yalof & Alex Murphy*, Carol & Joe Wujcik, Kathe & Dave Roberts - *In Memory of Chuck Holtzer*, Stan Yalof, Tom Knapik, Richard Plant, Pamela & Lee Badger, Monte & Mary Woodworth, Beth Dargan, and Cindy Wead. All of these members deserve a great **BIG THANK YOU!!!** And a thank you to our treasurer **Herb Stern** for collating all this information - sorry, that it did not get into last month's issue.

A very special "So Long", but not good-bye to **Michael Cullen!** Michael is moving to Sacramento — he will remain a member of SDC&SS - just a long-distance member. Bet we still get him down here for our June show!! For years and years and years (and he's not even that old!) Michael has always been the first to arrive and the last leave — always working — doing those jobs that are "thankless" but seem to mysteriously get done. Well, the mystery worker was always Michael — helping our club in so many ways — from plant sales to clean-up crew to staging our Del Mar Fair Exhibits. His energy will be sorely missed. We wish you the very best in the New Year! Please come down and visit whenever you can! **THANK YOU FOR A JOB ALWAYS WELL DONE!** Hopefully, we can get some new volunteers to help with our monthly plant sales. Please contact our new president **Tom DeMerritt** if you are interested in helping out.

Congratulations to SDC&SS members **Jim & Roberta Hanna** and **Duke & Kaz Benedom** on receiving **CSSA Superior Service Awards**. We know you totally deserved this acknowledgement. There is a terrific article about both of these couples in the Nov-Dec issue of the *Cactus & Succulent Journal*.

Kelly Griffin has started a **Aloe Study Group**. If you are interested in aloes - know a lot or little, or if you have plant material for sale or trade, a pollen request, or something else to contribute, please send your requests to: Kelly Griffin, 350 Shawn Elise Way, Encinitas, CA 92024 (760) 942-4866.

The San Diego Horticultural Society meets @ 6:30pm on the second Monday of each month at the Del Mar Fairgrounds- Satellite Wagering Facility. For more information please call (760) 630-7307. The next three programs are: **January 14 - Dr. Zsolt Debreczy**, the Dendrological Atlas Project - a guide to all Temperate Region trees and shrubs. **February 9 - Deborah Burt**, Parent Advisor to The Healing Environment Garden, San Diego Children's Hospital. **March 9 - Mike Evans**, Tree of Life Nursery - Native Plants.

Joseph Casey of the Gates Cactus & Succulent Society in Redlands / San Bernardino sent us the almost whole scoop about the December 1997 "Cover Girl" — from a LIFE Magazine which unfortunately was not dated. Apparently, a publicity man named Drachman "first had the bright idea of dressing girls up in cactus plants." He was working for the Tucson Tourist Bureau. The photo that we received on a Birthday card was apparently one of a set of publicity shots that were sent to over 500 newspapers around the world. The article states "This was such a fine showing that the device is being further developed and some day the cactus girl is likely to become Tucson's trademark. The publicity hasn't brought many tourists to Tucson but it makes the people in Tucson feel fine." We believe these photo sessions took place in the early 1960's judging by their clothing, etc. The model's name was Merri Ciochetti. Here's another shot of her—for those of you that did not get enough last month!

Page 3



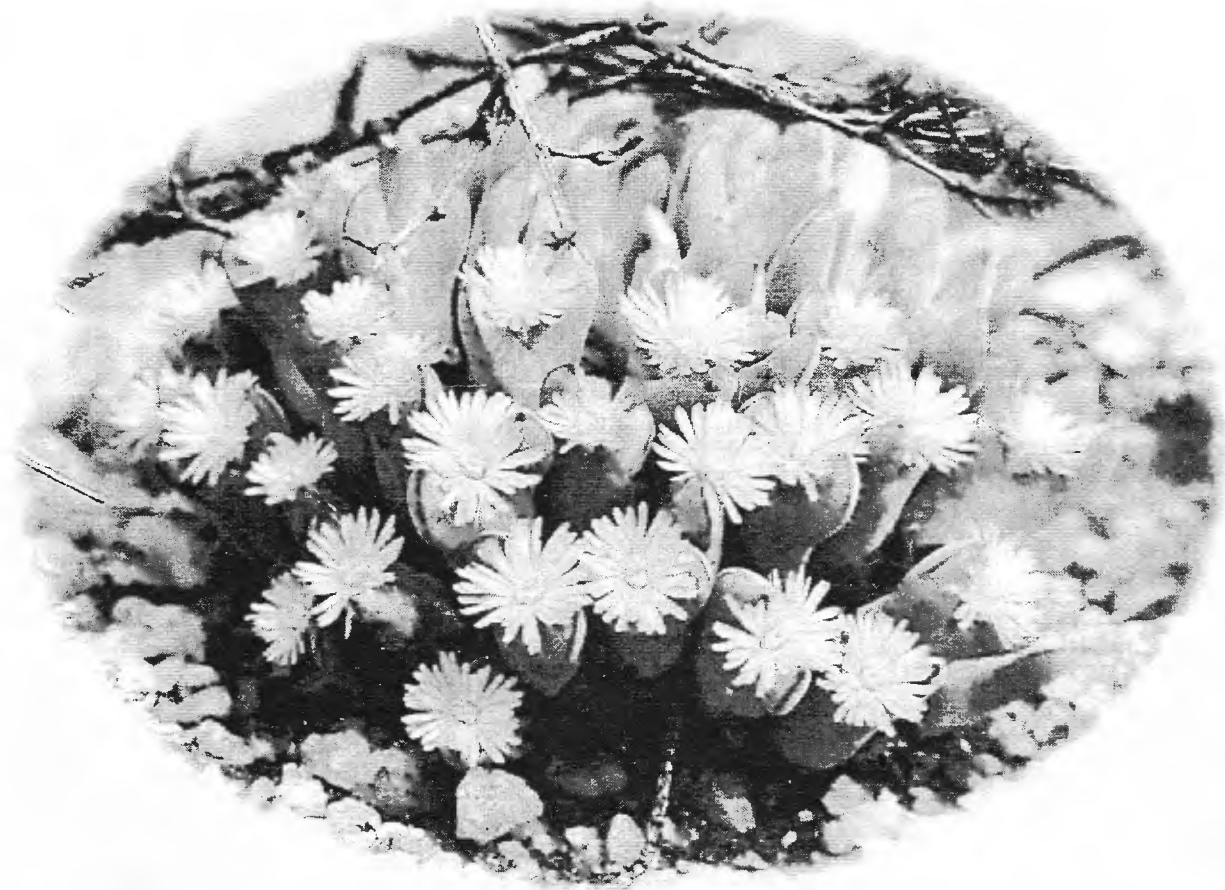
THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY PRESENTS
A WINTER SUCCULENT AND BLOOMING CACTUS
> > > SHOW AND SALE < < <

ONE DAY ONLY - JANUARY 10 1998

SHOW 10 - 5

SALES 9 - 5

ROOM 101 - CASA DEL PRADO, BALBOA PARK, SAN DIEGO, CA



J. A. Betzler

A photo of *Conophytum umdausense* at Undaus, near Steinkopf in Namaqualand. This winter flowering succulent is just one of many plant examples that you will be able to see at the SDCSS January show.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

ED DeLOLLIS 760 945-7892

OR

JOEY BETZLER 619 569-8510

SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY PREEMINENT SOUTH AFRICA EXPERT

STEVEN HAMMER WILL START AT 2:00 P.M.

San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Winter Show

In this non-competitive event, specimens will be shown alongside plants of similar family and genus. Classifications will include but not be limited to the following winter growing and blooming plants.

DIVISION 1 INDIVIDUAL POTTED SUCCULENTS:

- AIZOACEAE FAMILY
(Mesembrianthemaceae) *Lithops*,
Conophytum, etc.
 - ASPHODELACEAE FAMILY *Aloe*,
Gasteria, *Haworthia*, etc.
 - CACTACEAE FAMILY *Mammillaria*,
etc.
 - CRASSULACEAE FAMILY
Adromischus, *Cotyledon*, *Tylecodon*,
Crassula, *Kalanchoe*, *Echeveria*,
Aeonium, etc.
 - EUPHORBIACEAE FAMILY
Euphorbia and other related genera
 - GERANIACEAE FAMILY
Pelargonium, *Sarcocaulon*
 - APOCYNACEAE FAMILY *Adenium*,
Pachypodium, etc.
 - ASCLEPIADACEAE FAMILY
Caralluma, *Fockea*, *Hoodia*,
Huernia, *Stapelia*, *Hoya*, *Ceropegia*,
etc.
- ## SUCCULENTS OF OTHER FAMILIES:
- AGAVACEAE FAMILY *Agave*, *Yucca*
etc.
 - ASTERACEAE FAMILY *Senecio*,
Othonna
 - BROMELIACEAE FAMILY *Dyckia*,
etc.
 - BURSERACEAE FAMILY *Bursera*,
Commiphora
 - DIDIEREACEAE FAMILY *Alluadia*,
Decarya, *Didierea*, etc.
 - DRACAENACEAE FAMILY
Dracaena, *Sansevieria*, etc.

- MORACEAE FAMILY *Dorstenia*,
Ficus, etc.
- PASSIFLORACEAE FAMILY *Adenia*
- PORTULACACEAE FAMILY
Anacampseros, etc.
- VITACEAE FAMILY *Cissus*,
Cyphostemma, etc.
- PACHYCAULS, CAUDICIFORMS and
GEOPHYTES
- ANY OTHER GENUS
- CRESTED or MONSTROSE

DIVISION 2 INDIVIDUAL POTTED BULBS:

- *Amaryllis*, *Boophne*, *Gethyllis*,
Haemanthus, *Lachenelia*,
Ornithogallum, etc.

DIVISION 3 COLLECTIONS

A set of 6 - 10 different specimens that are related by a common theme: genus, form, shape or other character.

- CACTI
- OTHER succulents

DIVISION 4 SPECIALITIES

- ARRANGEMENTS floral and
otherwise; cacti and/or succulents
- DISH GARDENS and planters

DIVISION 5 DISPLAYS

- DISPLAYS and EXHIBITS

DIVISION 6 ART WORK

- CACTI or SUCCULENT
Photography and Artwork

A BAJA THANKSGIVING

BY JOYCE BUCKNER

The week of November 23rd began with so much rain — unusual for San Diego. We found ourselves frequently switching to the weather channel, checking status on the current and upcoming storms. On Wednesday morning I drove through blinding rains and encountered an eight vehicle accident which included an INS (Immigration Services) bus. "Not a good sign," I thought to myself. On Wednesday afternoon I gathered up all of our camping gear with guarded optimism — surely, it has already rained enough — the end is in sight — by five o'clock that evening it was barely sprinkling.

Wet and weary, Larry & Linda Nichols arrived later that evening. Larry is president of the Orange County Cactus & Succulent Society; he and his wife, Linda, had never traveled in Baja any further south than Ensenada; they were really looking forward to seeing the real Baja. Although it was just sprinkling down here, it had been pouring torrents in Los Angeles and Orange County! Consulting maps and once again the weather station we all actively decided that it was not going to rain on our parade! We had the next five days off and were determined to travel south and have a good time! All of our positive thoughts and planning must have had an effect on the universe, because we awoke to clear crisp air and partly-cloudy-but-mostly-blue skies! We were off! Meeting Joe & Carol Wujcik and Woody & Kathy Minnich & family at the border insurance office, we were now a caravan of five vehicles. Consulting maps and discussing *cerveza* [beer], fuel, and pee stops, we made arrangements to meet with the Minnichs and the Wujciks in *El Vulcan* — a good seven hour drive from the border with the last leg of this journey on a rough and possibly washed-out rocky, dirt road.

Each of us was carrying one part of the Thanksgiving dinner. There was going to be a feast tonight!

On the toll road going south past Rosarito Beach we started noticing the wonderful powder blue *Dudleya brittonii* growing on the cliffs. There is also a lime green variety of this dudleya which we spotted. Somewhere past Ensenada we picked up a great big nail that immediately flattened our tire. We pulled over — there could not have been a muddier embankment!! Using pieces of old tires, other highway debris and roadkill we managed to stabilize the jack enough to change tires. Thank goodness Larry was there to help us. About ten miles up the road we found a *llantera* and had our flat fixed for a cool \$2.00. Unfortunately we were now a good hour behind the rest of the Thanksgiving feast!

No matter how many times you've experienced it there is no adequate description for the awe inspired by the first sightings of a boojum forest! It is truly a sight to behold. We felt like we could hear Larry & Linda's "ooo's" and "ahh's" as we simultaneously slowed down to about 35mph to enjoy the splendor of the boojums or Idrias, *Fouquieria columnaris*. We were getting further and further behind, and it didn't really matter — we came here to enjoy the view! The boojums were looking more robust and green than I had ever seen them. Many of the younger ones that were between four and ten feet tall had so much bushy foliage that you could barely make out their thick, whitish, upside down carrotlike trunks. The whole desert was vibrant with color from the recent rains. Everything was green, healthy and blooming.

Michael began pointing out all the special plants I was seeing: *Ferocactus gracilis*, *Opuntia bigelovii*, *Opuntia molesta*, *Opuntia tesajo*, *Myrtillocactus cochal*, *Bergerocactus emoryi*, *Agave shawii*, *Lophocereus schottii*, and, of course, the grand Cardons, *Pachycereus pringlei*. By the time we made it to *El Marmol* (on a well-traveled dirt road about ten miles in from the highway) it was already getting dark. We stopped there for a moment to examine the very rough road to *El Vulcan*. Some campers there confirmed that the rest of our group had gone through there approximately 90 minutes prior. Larry got us to stop looking at the plants and the road long enough to point out a rare view of the planet Mercury — our first astronomy lesson.

Well, we did not make it all the way out to *El Vulcan* that night. The road was just too rough to maneuver at night. The Jeep fell into a great big deep ditch in the middle road. That was enough for me — after we got the Jeep out of the hole, I insisted that we travel no further this evening. Our part of the Thanksgiving dinner would just have to wait. That night Larry got out his telescope — the genuine article — a great big guy with a 13" reflective mirror. He showed us Jupiter with four moons visible. He told us about how Galileo had discovered these moons with his telescope in 1610, and realized that the earth was not the center of the universe; this very unpopular belief got him thrown out of the church and landed him in prison. We got to observe Saturn with its colorful rings, a nebula in Orion's Belt, and many other wonders of the sky.

We woke up in a beautiful elephant tree forest. I have never seen a finer display of *Pachycormis discolor*, elephant trees. The sky was clear and the air was crisp. The road did not look nearly as bad — it was going to be a great day for being out in nature. After breakfast I got out my sketch book — the hills were alive with inspiration: *Fouquieria splendens*, *Pachycormis discolor*, *Pachycereus pringlei*, sage, desert mallow, mule daisies or brittlebush, *Calliandra*—the fairy duster, lupines, and a low-growing succulent leaved weed which I still have not been able to identify. Michael, Linda and

Larry went for a hike — they found Woody's camp within a mile of ours. Joe & Carol had brought a lot of great firewood; they were quite surprised that we could neither hear them nor see their fire the night before. Alas, it was a rough winding mountain road — just one little canyon had pleasantly buffered us from the rest of the world!

We spent a good part of the day exploring *El Vulcan* and the old mine at *El Marmol* collecting rust and rocks and photographing idrias, butterflies, and friends. We went on to explore the magnificent valley of granite boulders that you cross just before getting to *Catavina*. We decided that "Split Rock" would be an accommodating camp area for five vehicles and set up camp just before dark. There was still plenty of Leah's Thanksgiving turkey and Kathy's mashed potatoes; I had brought the cranberry sauce, green beans with fried onions, and gravy; Linda put together a wonderful veggie platter with spinach dip and sourdough bread. Kathy opened a bottle of White Zinfandel; Carol brought out cookies and a bottle of brandy; Larry got out some *cerveza*, and we (of course!) brought out a bottle of *Hornitos Tequila* and sliced up some juicy Mexican limes. Dinner was delicious!

Joe unloaded the rest of his firewood — enough to keep us very warm and comfy late into the night. Since the temperature dropped tremendously once the sun had set we were all very appreciative of Joe's firewood. Larry set up his telescope a little walk away from our lights and campfire — Astronomy 101 was offered to all who were interested. There was no moon and the sky could not have been clearer. Everyone was impressed with the colors of Saturn's rings. We could actually see the shadows of the rings on the planet, but it was surprising to see the rings running approximately from a 12 o'clock position to a 6 o'clock position. Most of us were hit by a profound sense of our own insignificance. Larry expounded on the hundreds of millions of galaxies and the phenomenon of this still expanding universe; he weaved his lesson together with bits of history, legends, and mythology. We were all glad that young Sarah was there for this lesson. A good time was had by all.



Happy Campers (left to right): Donald & Leah, Carol & Joe Wujcik, Michael & Joyce Buckner, Kathy & Woody Minnich, Linda & Larry Nichols. Photo by Sarah Minnich.

The next morning we all scattered for exploratory walks. Woody told us where we could find a whole stand of Nolinias, *Nolina parryi*. Michael and Larry took that as a photo opportunity. I tried my hand at sketching Cardons and washed all of our camp dishes and silverware. The Wujciks and the Minnichs were planning to spend the night in Ensenada and get back over the border early Sunday afternoon. We broke camp and said our good-byes. The Nichols and the Buckners had two more days of fun tickets — we were headed south!

We stopped in *Catavina* and purchased black-market gasoline siphoned from five-gallon containers by young boys. We tipped them with red licorice and Coca-Colas, even though they did not clean our windshield! We had not traveled more than 20 miles south of *Catavina* when we ran into another familiar group of happy cactophyles: Jim & Roberta Hanna, Chuck Everson, Jerry Williams, Duke & Kaz Benedom, Joe Clements and his son, Chris, and Bridgett & Charlie Williams were all stopped along the side of the road. They all looked much cleaner than us — they were staying at the La Quinta Hotel in *Catavina* —

wow, that was really roughing it, guys!! We all went searching an outcropping of rocks not far from the highway for some extinct-or-not-so-extinct cactus, the elusive *Echinocereus lindsayii*. We did get to see some lovely stands of *Yucca whipplei* var. *eremica*; this is a very pretty variety of yucca with dark trunks, endemic to only this area.

We may not have found the species we were looking for, but we certainly did not leave their company empty-handed. This happy group was loaded down with more delicious snack food than our local 7-11; we were given some wonderful homemade fudge from Roberta, cookies from Kaz, licorice ropes, and M&M trailmix from Joe. Thanks guys! Next year we'll bring the stuffing, and the tequila, of course!

Back on the road we had a good hundred+ miles to cover and only a few more hours of light — and the gas gage of our old gas-guzzling Jeep still appeared dangerously low — too low for venturing out on a dirt road. So, we traveled south of our planned camping spot to the village of *Jesus-Maria*, which appeared to be the only town with an open gas station since *El Rosario*.

Going through several more Mexican military stops — they were always asking for the same things, "arms and mota," [i.e. guns and grass].

We all thought it quite amusing that although by the end of our trip we had endured some dozen or more military stops/searches — always with Michael & I in front driving "the Pumpkin" our old orange Wagoneer and Larry & Linda immediately behind us in an Aerostar van which contained a very large two-piece telescope which completely filled the entire inside of their van — yet, never once did the military even inquire as to what it was — it was certainly big enough to be a canon, but they never even asked. Guess we just did not look like gun or drug runners — they all have nicer trucks! We finally got back to the beach turn-off we were looking for, pulled over to a nice little campsite just off the road to the beach area, *Punta Rosarito*. We could hear the trucks from the highway in one direction and the Pacific Ocean from the other. Both sounds were distant and not bothersome. We slept very well.

That morning we woke to one of the most beautiful rosy colored sunrises I have ever seen. Although, I am the first to admit to having very limited sunrise experience, I will always remember this one as quite special. And Michael has a slide to prove it! This was probably my favorite day of the trip. We headed on the dirt road toward the beach. As we crossed this one little washed-out area we stopped to photograph a beautiful bladder weed — the pods looked like light orange-pinkish Chinese lanterns, *Cardiospermum corindum*, and a bulbous lavender hued lily. As we traveled closer to the ocean the beach noises became louder and louder. There was no sand on this beach. It was all rock — large round rocks, averaging four to six inches — up close the waves were deafening. We pulled over about a mile from the beach.

Before I was even out of the Jeep I was gasping and pointing to some wonderful windswept specimens of *Pachycormis discolor*; they were probably just old as the tall ones we had seen at *El Vulcan*, but they were no more than two feet tall here. Then I discovered *Jatropha cinerea*, *Bursera microphylla*, beautiful stunted specimens of *Fouquieria diguetii* with peeling bark, and

some perfectly bonsai-shaped specimens of *Euphorbia misera*.

Larry was just as excited. He had discovered a *Mammillaria blossfeldiana* in bloom — a wonderful clownlike hot pink & white striped flower — and almost the same size as the entire plant! We were standing, of course, on the type locality where it was originally found in 1931. We went on to discover *Mammillaria brandegeei*, *Mammillaria hutchinsonii*, *Mammillaria louisae*, *Mammillaria dioica*, *Agave cerulata*, *Echinocereus maritimus*, *Ferocactus rectispinus*, and *Asclepias albicans* (Wax Milkweed). This was all within 30 feet of our vehicles. We grabbed some water and our cameras, and were off. I stayed in the lower areas and found a rusty old wind-up toy, sun opalized glass bottles, sea shells, a fantastic piece of iron pyrite, several species of dudleyas, lots of wild flowers, *Atriplex* (Saltbush - an non-native originally from Australia), *Salicornia bigelovii* (Pickleweed), and brilliant red carpets of *Mesembryanthemum crystallinum*, also, surprisingly, a non-native.

When we all got back for lunch it was just like Show & Tell! Michael had shown Larry a Pleistocene shell midden and they had brought back some very large fossilized oyster shells. Larry & Linda had also found some bones and a really cool doll's head. We all had picked up some special staging rocks. We would have spent another night right there if not for the prospect of a 15 hour drive home on Monday. The afternoon sky was filling with plump grey clouds. We did not need the weather station to figure out that it was probably going to rain. Time to start heading north. We stopped one more time before reaching the highway to photograph a lonely old specimen of *Lemaireocereus (Stenocereus) thurberi*, the Organ Pipe Cactus at its most northern Baja stands. Along the highway going back up the coast we observed beautiful palm canyons, forests full of Cardons, boojums, opuntias and *Yucca valida*. We made a stop near the skeleton of an old burned-out school bus. While Larry and Michael took photos of each other "driving the bus." Linda and I went over to inspect a field of beautiful vivid purple blooming Sand Verbena, *Abronia gracilis*.

A Baja Thanksgiving by Joyce Buckner continued . . .

That night we camped "on top of the world" in the mountain range between *El Rosario* and *Catavina*. It was the only time during our entire trip that it rained on us, and the rain did not start until we were completely tucked into our vehicles and ready for sleep. Larry and Linda has just finished completely covering up the telescope — what timing — we felt as if we were the very definition of "happy go lucky!" In the morning — which was bright and sunny — we discovered some wonderful red polka-dotted dudleyas, *Dudleya albiflora*, a *Machaerocereus (Stenocereus) gummosus* crest, along with a beautiful large multi-trunked *Myrtillocactus cochal*.

Since it was still very early in the morning we decided to head back down the mountain going south, as Michael wanted to show us the petroglyphs and pictoglyphs near the Mission San Fernando. We had looked for the turn-off the night before, but missed it. Apparently there was only a sign for those coming from the north! The *Mision San Fernando de Velicata* is the only standing monument left of the work of the Franciscans during their short tenure in Baja California. It was established by Father Junipero Serra before he moved to San Diego — it became an important mission caring for about 1500 Indians. A tragic epidemic during the years of 1777-80 destroyed its ability to function properly. It was deserted in 1818. Presently, we found the crumbling mission not completely abandoned. There were several corals, a small vegetable garden, a makeshift basketball court. There is an old man who has lived here his entire life — like his father before him, he is the self-appointed caretaker of this historical landmark. We drove past the old man's house down to the river bed where the rocky cliffsides were covered with wall etchings — most very old — some, unfortunately very new — damn taggers. Beautiful powder blue dudleyas, *Dudleya anthonyi*, grew out of vertical cracks in the rocks. This was to be one of our last photo opportunities.

We stopped in *El Rosario* first to photograph some homes with the yards and roofs covered with drying red chilies. Then we stopped in at Mama Espinoza's for a fantastic lunch of lobster, eggs, and tortillas. Doña Anita Espinoza came down from her home to greet us and show us her new book — which we bought, of course. She told us that she had just recently seen Dr. George Lindsay and had met that "handsome new young man" who was now Curator of Botany for San Diego's Museum of Natural History [Jon Rebman Ph.D]. She gave us both great big hugs and she gave me a special kiss to give to her dear old friend Bob Taylor. On the following page we have reprinted several pages from her new book, **REFLECTIONS - An Autobiography of Doña Anita Grosso de Espinoza**, copyright 1994/97, Arte y Publicidad Gráfica, Ensenada, Baja California, Mexico. The other references I have used for this article are:

—Slides - Wit & Wisdom - Thanks to: Michael Buckner

—**Baja California Plant Field Guide** by Norman Roberts, c. 1989, Natural History Publishing Co., La Jolla CA.

—**The Baja Book II** by Tom Miller & Elmar Baxter, c. 1982, Baja Trail Publications, Huntington Beach CA.

—**50 Choice Mammillarias** by Brian Fearn & Leslie Percy, c. 1979, Abbey Brook Cactus Nursery, Derbyshire, England.

—**Flora of Baja California** by Ira L. Wiggins, c. 1980, Stanford Press

—**Sonoran Desert Plants - an ecological atlas** by Turner, Bowers & Burgess, c. 1995, University of Arizona Press



OLD ROAD, HEAVY DUTY PEOPLE

BY MAMA ESPINOZA

"Bad roads, good people. Good roads, many people."

Bad roads brought heavy duty persons, like George Lindsay, the young American student from Pomona College, who arrived here in 1934. On his first trip, he arrived in a Model A, and had to wait in El Rosario for over a week until the next supply of gasoline arrived, by boat.

In the future years, he would come periodically to see us at San Juan de Dios. He and his good student friends kept coming until Pearl Harbor, then he was sent overseas to Germany. When he next returned, he had become Director of Balboa Park in San Diego [*editor's note: Actually, he became the Curator of the San Diego Museum of Natural History.*], and had secured a Doctor's Degree in Botany. Beginning with his first trip to Baja, Dr. Lindsay began looking for the long lost species of cactus, *Pachycereus orcutii* [*Pachgerocereus orcuttii, ed.*], but it was never found until October of 1949 when Mr. Charles Harbison notified me of cuttings that were of the authentic *Pachycereus orcutii* cactus.

One afternoon of a late summer day, I was getting a rest when Lily came yelling, "Un gringo is asking for Mama Espinoza." I said out loud, "Wait, what does he need?" She said he is looking for a cactus, but she said a 'Cholla'. "Ho!" I thought, "someone wants information about the *Pachycereus orcutii* cactus," and here was an American with a book. I remember saying, "Ho! You mean the big, big cardon de Cañedo, or like we called it El Cardon de Cañedo?" He said he wanted a guide to take him over to locate the big cactus, that he had read in the book about "The Flame". There was a person in the book who was said to have died in the shade of this enormous cactus in 1903. The American had a Geiger counter, a treasure detector, and he wanted things done quickly, like many Americans. He did not have the patience of our mañana Mexicans. He said he was looking for the Big Cactus, and the place where the person in the book was buried. He wanted to dig the place of his tomb. I said, "Right now, it is for me impossible, but wait, I will find someone that can take you to where the big cardon, once upon a time existed." The story about the big-cactus is true, but about the missing American in the book, I do not know. That is what many legends and stories are written about. The American who came to my home was reading The Journey of the Flame by Joseph Crutch. I never saw that American again, and I do not know to this day whether he ever returned from the canyon of the big cactus.

During the old days, the heavy duty Americans, scientists, writers, rockhounds and many others came looking for cactus, like Dr. George Lindsay, Eduardo and Betty Gay, Virginia Martin, Robert and Suzanne Taylor, and Doctor and Señora Humphrey. Dr. Humphrey came from the University of Arizona in the first Volkswagen Van we had ever seen, a white one, the first to come down on these dirt roads. He found the tallest Cirio plant or "boojum," like many people call them. He found one 72 feet tall. The Cirio is one of the most fascinating plants of Baja, and has brought so many cactus people to Baja. The scientist name of the Cirio is *Idria Calumnaris* [*Fouquieria columnaris*], a relative of the Ocotillo. It occurs in a 150 mile wide east/west corridor, from just below El Rosario to north of Guerrero Negro. It is a tree of rare shape; it survives in one of the harshest climates in the world. When the plant is small, the Cirio is a roundish looking much like a turnip or carrot that is growing upside down. There are forests of these weird looking trees [in Baja] . . . they are found nowhere else in the world, except for a very limited area in Kino Bay, Sonora, Mexico. The Cirio led the botanist, Godfrey Sykes, to come to Baja. It was him, Sykes, who named the Cirio "boojum."

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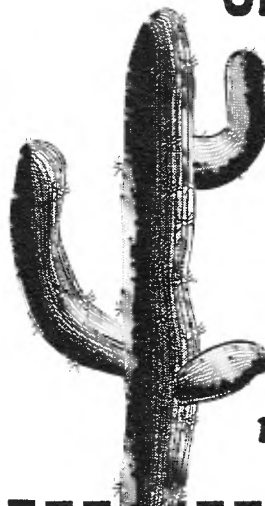
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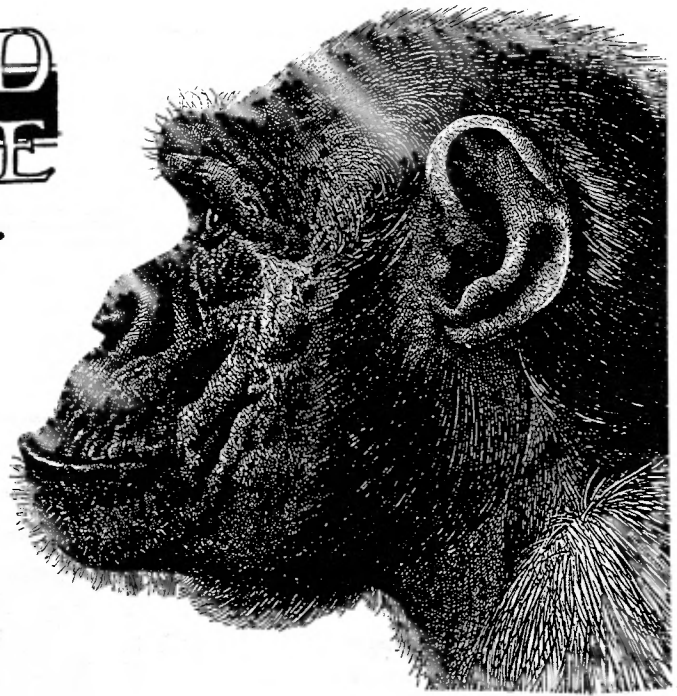
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WISE AND OTHERWISE

by Michael Buckner

*Whatever has form
is in the process still
of being formed.
Form is never fixed.*

—M.C. RICHARDS



The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself.

—HENRY MILLER

Just as there is diversity in color, shape and scent [of cacti], so there are differences in the timing and duration of flowering; and these can be seen as adaptations to the periods at which the pollinators are active. There are day-flowering species which close at night, and others where the flowers are strictly nocturnal. Yet others remain open, day and night, for a longer period of time. Just to give a few examples: flowers of *Melocactus violaceus* open at noon and are faded by the same evening; but in *Echinocereus* the blooms can last for up to 11 days. *Opuntia fulgens*, in its habitat near Tucson (Arizona), opens so punctually at three in the afternoon that — with a possible variation of 15 minutes — one can set a watch by it. Many species only open at dusk, and wither in the course of the following day (e.g. the white-flowered *Echinopsis*). Truly nocturnal flowers, such as the 'Queen of the Night' (*Selenicereus*), do not open until about 10 o'clock in the evening, and have withered before first light. Lastly there are some species where the flowers do not open at all in bad weather — and yet they can still set viable seed: e.g. certain forms of *Rhipsalis* and the little spherical cactus, *Frailea*, from South America. . . .

Known pollinators of cactus flowers are insects, certain birds which visit flowers, and bats. The most important of the insects are the *Hymenoptera* (e.g. bees and wasps), butterflies and moths, *Diptera* (e.g. hover-flies), and beetles. Because of their faceted eyes, most insects have a well developed sense of color and shape; thanks to their feelers, they also have a sense of smell. They prefer the rotate-raylike shape, such as that of most cacti. Their color-sense has developed rather differently from that of the human: as in the honey-bee, perception is displaced towards the shorter waves. These insects can see ultra-violet light, invisible to us, but in the long-wave band they cannot see red as a color; moths can even see colors at light intensities where the human eye can only perceive shades of grey. In the cactus homelands all these groups of insects are known to pollinate cactus flowers.

CACTI — BOTANICAL ASPECTS, DESCRIPTIONS & CULTIVATION by Wilhelm Barthlott, 1979, Stanley Thornes Ltd., England.

I remembered one morning when I discovered a cocoon in the bark of a tree, just as the butterfly was making a hole in its case and preparing to come out. I waited a while, but it was too long appearing and I was impatient. I bent over it and breathed on it to warm it. I warmed it as quickly as I could and the miracle began to happen before my eyes, faster than life. The case opened, the butterfly started slowly crawling out, and I shall never forget my horror when I saw how its wings were folded back and crumpled; the wretched butterfly tried with its whole trembling body to unfold them. Bending over it, I tried to help it with my breath. In vain. It needed to be hatched out patiently and the unfolding of the wings needed to be a gradual process in the sun. Now it was too late. My breath had forced the butterfly to appear, all crumpled, before its time. It struggled desperately and, a few seconds later, died in the palm of my hand.

That little body is, I do believe, the greatest weight I have on my conscience. For I realize today that it is a mortal sin to violate the greatest laws of nature. We should not hurry, we should not be impatient, but we should confidently obey the eternal rhythm.

—Nikos Kazantzakis, from *Zorba The Greek*



WISE AND OTHERWISE

The position of the leaves (or the podaria) on the stem follows the general laws of leaf-arrangement, in which two possibilities are distinguished: the growing tip either produces several leaf-primordia simultaneously, or leaf-primordia form consecutively. The first type is known as 'verticillate', where consecutive leaf-whorls alternate and the angles between each two sets of leaves are equal. In the second type the leaf-position is 'alternate': the consecutive leaves are connected by an imaginary spiral running round the stem and here, too, the angles between two consecutive leaves are equal. If these angles are expressed not in degrees but in fractions of the stem-circumference, the following values are often found: $1/2$, $1/3$, $2/5$, $3/8$, $5/13$. The angle $2/5$, for example, means that by spiralling twice around a stem, starting from a certain leaf, the fifth leaf will be exactly above of below the leaf started from. Certain leaves are positioned in 'orthostichies' — or straight lines — so in the $2/5$ position there would be five lines. This sequence of angles is also referred to as the 'Fibonacci genes', which is formulated so that the numerator of a fraction equals the sum of the two previous numerators, the same with the denominator, until the divergence limit is reached at $137^\circ, 30'$.

However, the significance of these divergence values should not be overestimated. During the course of ontogenesis several divergences may occur consecutively and overlap each other. In addition, the position of leaves or mamillae also depends on the relationship of the younger leaf-buds to the older ones in the course of progressing round the basic spiral. The possibility of contact between the leaf primordia depends on their relative size and the circumference of the meristem. Depending on the kind of contact made in each case, the number of the 'parastichies' — or oblique lines — will emerge. These can be observed particularly well with *Mammillarias*.

The Cactus Handbook by Erik Haustein, 1988, Chartwell Books, Secaucus, New Jersey

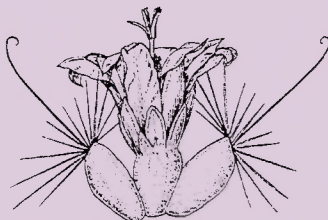
"Through no fault of our own, and by dint of no cosmic plan of conscious purpose, we have become, by the grace of a glorious evolutionary accident called intelligence, the stewards of life's continuity on Earth. We have not asked for that role, but we cannot abjure it. We may not be suited to it, but here we are."

—STEPHEN JAY GOULD

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