



Espinas y Flores

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

XVIII, Number 1

January 8, 1983

Happy New Year

JANUARY MEETING
 Saturday January 8, 1983
 1:30 P.M.



Casa Del Prado, Room 101, Balboa Park

PROGRAM

CULTURAL HINTS BY THE EXPERTS

A panel of successful growers will discuss their methods for growing the various plants of our hobby. They will also 'Field' any questions from the members. A good opportunity to take advantage of this once a year course of study.

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DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE -- JANUARY 31, 1983 -
 Have a very Happy New Year -- Mary

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Our newly elected officers for 1983 - 84

- President - Frank Thrombley
- 1st Vice President - Dr. Leroy Phelps
- 2nd Vice President - John Pasek
- Recording Secretary - Susan Clements
- Treasurer - Warren Buckner
- Corresponding Secretary - Robert Kent

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Welcome to our new member - Phyllis Sheldon, LaJolla

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REMINDER DUES ARE DUE

Make payments to Warren Buckner - preferred way is by Personal Check with Current Name, address, and phone number - Make check payable to San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society. Annual dues \$7.00 per family.

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Those who are to bring refreshments for January - -

- Sarah Jervey Floretta Warner M. Wohl Frances Johnson Jane Farbis
- Frank Ramirez Veronica Schmidt Beverly Kent Marianne Thrombley
- Sanford Roberts Janice Miller - Thanks in advance

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Our december meeting worked out very well. There were many contributors to the special plant exchange. Enough food for seconds - delicious too - and many wonderful gifts plants to everyone who attended. Hope everyone enjoyed it as much as I did. Thanks to all who made it such a success.

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Contribution and suggestions (Pro and Con) are much appreciated for this newsletter. Talk to me at the meetings or call me at home. I want to make this a good newsletter each month. Marv

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SUCCULENT-OF-THE-MONTH

SUCCULENTS OF THE CANARY ISLANDS

(Aeoniums, Aichrysons, Greenovias, Monanthes)

Dorothy Dunn

The Canary Islands consist of a group of seven main islands located off the northwest coast of Africa, in the vicinity of southern Morocco. All are of volcanic origin and on one (Lanzarote) there is still some live volcanic action in the Montanas del Fuego (Mountains of Fire). The islands are Gran Canaria, Teneriffe, La Palma, Gomero, Hierro, Lanzarote, and Fuerteventura.

The Canaries are actually the tops of volcanic mountains protruding from the sea, with altitudes ranging from 4,000 to over 12,000 feet. They are subtropical in appearance and have a vernal climate all year around, with virtually no difference between the seasons. These conditions are conducive to a great wealth and variety of plant life, much of which is native to these islands and not occurring naturally anywhere else in the world. While the succulent flora comprises only a small percentage of this amazing abundance, the number of genera represented is surprisingly diverse. These include: Aeonium, Aichryson, Greenovia, Monanthes, Sedum, Ceropegia, Caralluma, Euphorbia, Senecio, and Aloe. However, since the first four above-mentioned genera contain most of the succulent species found in the Canaries (only eight species are not native), this article will be limited to them.

Aeoniums, Aichrysons, Greenovias, and Monanthes all belong to the Sempervivoideae section of the huge Crassulaceae family, and are often referred to as the "Canary Island Sempervivums". They are more tender than the hardy European Sempervivums, but the species usually found in cultivation in this country are among the easiest plants to grow, requiring only ordinary garden soil, good drainage, and some shade and protection from frost for most of them. They do exceptionally well in mild climates located close to the coast.

Aeoniums are closely related to Sempervivums and at one time were generally included in that genus. There are about 40 species and numerous hybrids. They are mostly succulent shrubs or sub-shrubs with woody, branching stems which often produce aerial roots. They range in size from the tiny, bushy A. sedifolium to the very large A. percarneum, A. canariense, A. urbicum, and A. nobile. They grow rapidly during the winter and are dormant in the summer, when they should be kept fairly dry. Most prefer some shade, although some - notably A. percarneum, A. sedifolium, and A. castello-paive - will take full sun. A few, such as A. arboreum var. atropurpureum and A. sedifolium, require full sun to enhance their distinctive colorations. Their habitats in the Canaries range from hot cliffs at sea level and clinker-type lava flows where it almost never rains (A. nobile, A. tabulaeforme, A. lindleyi) to moist, gloomy, densely-wooded mountainous areas (A. goochiae).

They are, with very few exceptions, easy to grow although all are frost-tender. They are susceptible to nematodes on their roots and mealy-bugs between their leaves. Propagation is simple from cuttings with most species, exceptions being A. nobile, which is slow-growing even under ideal cultivation conditions, rarely branches, and dies upon flowering, whereupon it produces millions of seeds, and A. tabulaeforme, which seldom branches (unless beheaded), and whose flowering signals its approaching demise. However, A. tabulaeforme, given some specialized care, can be reproduced from leaves, a feature unique in the genus.

Aeonium flowers are mostly yellow or straw-colored, although A. percarneum, A. decorum, and A. goochiae have pink flowers. However, A. nobile has a distinctive, much-branched inflorescence of dark red flowers, which is also a peculiarity in this genus. A few Aeoniums have decidedly sticky leaves, and one of these species, A. lindleyi, is widely-accepted as a reliable antidote for the irritation caused by Euphorbia sap.

Aichrysons are now routinely included in the genus Aeonium, although they do have some characteristics which set them apart. There are 12 species, all small plants, and all with yellow flowers. The generic name derives from two Greek words meaning "always gold". They have a habit of disappearing in cultivation as they usually die after flowering, and are usually considered to be biennials. They all prefer shade, and are a little more difficult to grow than Aeoniums. Like Aeoniums, they are winter-growing, summer-dormant, and frost-tender. Propagation is generally by cuttings.

Greenovias are named for G.B. Greenough, a geologist. There are only four species, all native to the mountainous regions of the Canary Islands where they grow in pine forests, and all have yellow flowers. They have a very definite summer resting period, when they close up into tight little "rosebuds" covered by a brown, papery skin, and appear all but dead. This peculiar characteristic gave rise to the common names "Irish Rose" or "Green Rosebuds". During this time they should be watered very sparingly, if at all. They start growing in the fall and flower in the early spring, and during this period they require more water and warmth. They like a porous, loamy soil and light shade. They are susceptible to mealy-bugs between the leaves (and snails all over the leaves!). They are profusely-clustering plants (except for G. diplocycla which never offsets) and therefore are usually propagated by cuttings.

There are about eighteen species and nine hybrids of Monanthes. Their name comes from the Greek, and means "one-flowered" or "single-flowered", although this has proved to be botanically incorrect. They are small, Sedum-like, clump-forming plants, with tiny fleshy leaves crowded into rosettes at the ends of extremely tenuous branches. In the Canaries they are found in a variety of habitats, including hot lower elevations near sea level, sheer cliffs at 8,000 foot altitudes, and on banks among thick grass, ferns, and mosses. In cultivation they seem to prefer shade. They are all tiny, delicate,

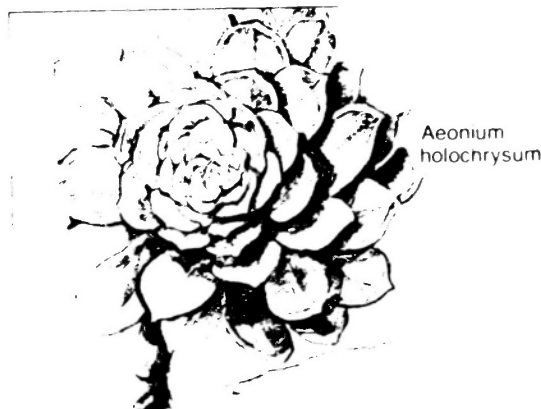
mat-forming plants with somewhat inconsequential flowers of dull yellow. However, each flower contains a ring of conspicuous spoon-shaped nectar glands. Monanthes is probably the most poorly-represented genus in cultivation of this particular group of plants.

Other interesting succulents indigenous to the Canary Islands include: Dracaena draco ("Dragon Tree"; the largest and oldest specimen grows on Teneriffe and is reputed to be at least 1,400 years old); Senecio kleinia, which is commonplace there, and several Euphorbias, the most prolific being E. canariensis. Other Euphorbias include E. obtusifolia var. regis-jubae, E. atropurpurea, and E. aphylla. There are also a few Ceropegias, including the "stick types" C. fusca and C. dichotoma, and Teneriffe is believed to be a natural habitat of Aloe barbadensis (A. vera).

There are no true cacti in the Canaries other than a few Opuntias which include O. dillenii and O. ficus-indica.

Literature cited:

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Lamb, Brian: Canary Island Succulents (Cactus and Succulent Journal: May-June, 1967; July-August, 1967)
Lamb, Edgar: Hunting Succulents in the Canary Islands (Cactus and Succulent Journal: May, June, July, 1946)
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Rowley, Gordon: The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Succulents



CACTUS OF THE MONTH

LOBIVIA

by Mark Donnell

Cacti of the genus Lobivia are among the most attractive plants in cultivation today. Native to the area between Central Peru and Northern Argentina. These plants are characterized by dense spination, hairy floral tubes and fruit, and large showy flowers. Some authors identify over 150 species, yet many of these undoubtedly represent only forms and varieties. Indeed, if one reads the South American Cactus Log published in the Cactus and Succulent Journal, Lau states that many colonies of Lobivia showed an amazing variety in spination and flower color. He tells the story of sending a dozen plants from one site to an European collector and later finding out that the collector had named three or four different species from that one group of plants! Backeberg lists roughly 130 species, of which 61 are from Bolivia, 42 are from Northern Argentina, and 26 are from South-Central Peru. They grow at altitudes varying from 3000 feet in Northern Argentina to over 13,000 feet in Peru and Bolivia. Most form clumps in older age but a few remain solitary. An interesting subgroup included those plants whose flowers have a hymen, or colored ring, at the base of the inner portion of the flower. Most of these plants are from Northern Argentina and Southern Bolivia. The color of the hymen varies among species from white to green to red to black and results in spectacularly colored flowers.

Lobivias are easily grown and do best in a well-drained soil with moderate watering during the growing season and infrequent or no watering in the winter. They prefer a lightly shaded position and most will sunburn if grown in full sun. They grow easily from seed, often flowering at three years of age and are relatively free-flowering. Many are self-sterile, but at least one species is reportedly self-fertile. Some of the most attractive Lobivias are unavailable to the collector except in seed form and are therefore less commonly seen at shows and in collections. Nonetheless these plants are some of the most beautiful flowering cacti in the world, and I would highly recommend them to everyone.

Article contributed by Flo Warner.



CACTUS GETS A SHAMPOO & BLOW DRY

THESE prickly customers are handled with kid gloves when they get their herbal shampoo and blow dry at the beauty parlor.

Hairdresser Andrew Barnes (above) of Snips salon in Exeter, England, was needed when the hairy cactuses were brought in for their first appointment, but he's since come to appreciate their silent ways. Colleague Caroline Clark (left) reports that the plants are her least demanding clients.

Gardner Charles Abbott, who exhibits his prize cactuses in flower shows, has nothing but praise for the Snips team.

"My plants are all smartened up by the hairdressers," says Abbott, "and I'm beating competition from all over the country."

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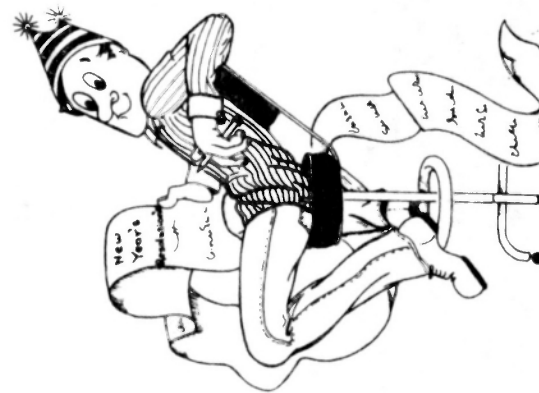
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Orientation:

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 cents.

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