



MAMMILLARIA THORNERI

# Espinas y Flores

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

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## PROGRAM:

Ed and Betty Gay will give a program on the "Echinocereanae". This huge subtribe includes everything from Ferocactus to Gymnocalycium. Mr. Gay is past-president of the National Society and past-chairman of the Convention Committee. He has been president of many of the clubs in the Los Angeles area. His 'morphologic' garden is the best private collection in the area and most of the plants were collected on his many trips into Mexico and Baja California. He not only knows where to find a good plant, he also knows what it is when he finds it.

June 12th, 1976, 1:30 pm, Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

CACTUS OF THE MONTH : Coryphantha - Thelocactus.

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH: Haworthia.

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MEMBERSHIP: The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society is open to all persons interested in growing cacti, other succulents and exotic plants. Dues: \$ 5.00 annually, due in December of each yer. Single copy of E y F : \$ 0.50.

Meetings: 2nd Saturday of each month, 1:30 pm, Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, unless otherwise indicated. Board convenes after the general meeting. Deadline for July publication is June 16, 1976.

## APOROCACTUS FLAGELLIFORMIS

### "Rattail Cactus"

Harry Boersma  
Repr. from CSIE,  
No. 4, 1976

Known from early times but still beloved by cactophiles, the 'rattail cactus' must be considered an "easy doer". It was already known in Linnaeus' time in 1753, and became increasingly popular thruout the Western world and beyond, no doubt for very good reasons, as its long tail-like green stems have a golden cast from the dense covering of bristly spines, and although with age they become more greyish in color, the rose-pink to purplish flowers blend in beautifully amongst its branches. While it was at one time a pride and joy in the conservatories of of nobleman, it can be grown even better today with greater knowledge and perhaps better fertilizers.

Aporocactus flagelliformis prefers filtered sunlight in summer and will grow in many different soils but seems to prefer a rich medium-heavy soil blended with old mossy organic material. It will produce abundant buds at Christmas time if given a good drenching in late November or when warmer weather has ceased, with temperatures of 45 to 50°F (7-13°C) to start. Regular watering should begin as soon as the first drenching has settled, liquid fertilizers may be added to the water. At this time especially the plant enjoys a gentle shower or mist spray several times a week, and should now be given maximum daylight and gradual temperature increases, parallel to spring temperatures, as its usually flowers any time to the end of June; March being the best period.

After June, the 'natural climatological dormancy' instinct takes over in the plant, and it should have infrequent waterings, only enough to remain green but flaccid, ready to start a new cycle again in November.

This plant was first reported from central and South America as well as Mexico, but no certain locality was known for many years although the natives in some of those countries have them hanging from their homes, grown in the traditional cowhorns and other more modern juice tins, etc. It has now been reported from near San Jose Del Oro and San Bartolo on the Rio Grande, Mexico..

There are other species of Aporocactus, and although this species is perhaps the most popular one, it does not, in my estimation, particularly mean that the others are less attractive, and no doubt are worth cultivation. Many hybrid plants have also been created, some known as 'Aporophyllum' from Aporocactus and Epiphyllum, while the name 'Heliaporus' alludes to hybrid cross of Heliocereus and Aporocactus, all of them belonging to the jungle cactus group.

#### References:

Cacti, J. Borg  
Cacti & Succulents, Hamlyn  
Kakteen Lexikon, Backeberg  
Illustrated Ref., Lamb  
Cactaceae, Britton & Rose.

Coryphantha- Thelocactus

Coryphantha, with a name meaning "top-flower", referring to the fact that its species produce flowers from the youngest tubercles at the apex of the stem, is a group of plants with globular to cylindrical stems and many tubercles, each with a prominent groove on its upper surface. The moderately large, showy, day-blooming flowers arise from the inner end of this groove and are primarily yellow, although some species have red or pinkish blooms. The large fruit is persistent and ripens slowly. As a result one can find this year's flowers on the plant at the same time as last year's fruits.

Cultivation of many species is fairly simple and these thrive in a warm sunny location with a porous, moderately rich soil. There are, however, several truly desertic species that are difficult to grow, as they require high temperatures (available in San Diego only in a greenhouse) and very little water to survive.

These are all Mexican and southwestern United States species.

Thelocactus, or "nipple cactus", contains species with globular or cylindrical spiny stems with tubercles arranged in a few low straight or spiraled ribs. Flowers arise apically from the youngest spineless tubercles. As in Coryphantha, the flowers arise from the inner end of a groove on the upper surface of the tubercle. The flowers are moderately large, showy, day-blooming and primarily yellow; pink to orange and red occur in a few species. The large, persistent fruit is similar to that in Coryphantha except that it is dry (versus wet in Coryphantha).

The most closely related genus is Gymnocactus, a group that differs from Thelocactus primarily in its amount of hair and scales on the ovary and flower tube. Thelocactus may be distinguished from Coryphantha by its dry fruit and the alignment of its tubercles into low ribs.

References:

- Britton, N.L. & J.N. Rose, 1923, The Cactaceae. Carnegies Inst. of Washington. Publ. 248, vol. 4, 381 pp.  
Marshall, W.T. & T.M. Bock, 1941. Cactaceae. Abbey Garden Press, 22 pp.

GARDEN HINTS

From Mrs. Kingsley, Point Loma, come the following excellent house remedies.

To combat aphids and other little pests break into several pieces a small package of chewing tobacco and place in a quart-sized Mason jar (or similar container with lid). Pour boiling water into jar, replace lid and allow mixture to age until consistency of thick heavy syrup. Use two table-spoons per gallon of water and hose plants down.

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## SUCCULENT-OF-THE-MONTH

Madelyn Lee

### HAWORTHIA

Family: Liliacea

Haworthias come from Southern Africa. They closely resemble Aloes and for a long time were included in this genus.

It is not difficult to locate a name for a Haworthia; in fact you will probably find four or five. There is probably more confusion with Haworthias than any other genus. The British, South Africans, Americans and Germans have all done a lot of work on this genus. As they do not agree with each other, you still have a problem deciding what name to use.

Jacobsen's 'Handbook of Succulent Plants' delegates 77 pages to the Haworthia with many good pictures. The American Cactus and Succulent Journal has always had many good articles. Two booklets by John Pilbeam, 'The First Fifty Haworthias' and 'The Second Fifty Haworthias' are good references also. One of these should give you an idea what species you have or might want.

The Haworthia's rosette of overlapping leaves has a symmetry and neat appearance which is very pleasing to the eye. Many of the species are easy to grow and stay small.

Generally there are two types of Haworthias. The "hard" forms usually have low ridges or lovely white stripes or 'pearls' in nice patterns on the leaves. These plants have a more ridged look and prefer more sun. The "soft" forms prefer less sun and more shade. Many of this type have translucent 'windows' in interesting patterns on the leaf tip.

Haworthias prefer very good drainage and a loose, rich soil. Be careful of water during the winter and during the resting period, which seems to vary from species to species. Many Haworthias drop their roots for no explainable reason. If you remove the dead roots and old dry leaves and re-pot the plant it will usually re-root in a short time.

Propagation is best by removing offsets. The seed hybridizes very easily. There are enough problems with this genus and hybrids would not improve the situation.

Bring one of your favorite Haworthias to the June meeting.

#### Garden Hints, cont'd:

Excellent remedy to get rid of mites, mealybugs, etc.: Obtain old-fashioned soap such as Fels-Naphta. Place soap in warm water and allow to dissolve until water is no longer translucent. Use full strength solution to spray plants with - indoor and outdoor. Not only does this method get rid of the pests but plants seem to love this treatment.

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CHAMAECCEREUS silvestrii

'Peanut Cactus'

Harry Boersma  
Repr. CSIE, 1976,  
No. 2

The 'Peanut Cactus' is now commonly seen in many parts of the world. It is not unusual to discover it amongst the array of other houseplants on a window sill far out in the countryside, for it truly seems to have spread everywhere with the help of human hands, because the small finger-like segments break off easily and root with ease.

It certainly would be interesting to know how many collectors and others were first inspired to grow cacti after having success with the 'peanut' on a window sill!

But while the plant is often met with, it is not as often seen in bud or flower -- it is usually kept too lush and green the year around, or simply the opposite, too hot and dry to be able to produce its lovely flowers. For best results the plants should be kept fairly dry and cool during two or three months of winter, with a fair amount of light. In a dry condition the plants will usually take several degrees of frost and become slightly limp and bronzy. Watering and fertilizing should begin as soon as new growth becomes apparent, but should be done gradually. A mist spray is very much appreciated by the plant at this time, in fact all through the year, for such dampness also gives protection against spider mites. Using this technique often stimulates even the smallest plants, segments only an inch long, to flower.

The 'Peanut Cactus' in habitat in the states of Tucuman and Salta in Argentina, is found growing amongst and underneath bushes in the hills and mountain ranges of that area. This cactus was first described as a *Cereus* by Speggazinni Inigos, who named it in honour of his friend Dr. Philip Silvestri. Britton & Rose later changed the name to Chamaecereus, alluding to the resemblance to a cereus yet different in its creeping depressed habit of growth.

While the 'Peanut Cactus' is common, it nevertheless deserves a place in every collection as its unobtrusive habit and small design make it worthwhile, besides the little tufts of dark brown furry buds appearing in the springtime which grow into splendid vivid scarlet flowers. While only one species is known in habitat, a yellow stemmed form has been around for many years and is usually seen grafted as the 'Golden Peanut'. Also a light green form is often found in cultivation. A larger flowering form known as 'grandiflora' probably belongs to the hybrid race 'Chamaelopsis' which are mostly hybrids between Chamaecereus silvestrii and Lobivia famatimensis forms and therefore may have different colored flowers, from yellow to orange or flame red as in the variety 'Flame'. All are worthwhile, although the hybrids are somewhat more robust. The yellow-flowered hybrid seems to flower least of all. The crested 'Peanut' may be hard to find, but is a novelty in itself.

Ref.: Britton & Rose.

Lamb's Illustrated Reference on Cacti & Other Succulents.

Hamlyn, A Concise Guide to Cacti and Succulents.

Beckeberg Lexicon.

## CEREUS-LY SPEAKING

Coming Events: The San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society will hold its 3rd annual show at the Huntington Library over the June 5th weekend. Those of you who have never visited the Huntington Botanical Gardens, Library and Art Collection will be treated to one of the most impressive spectacles I have ever seen. The Cacti and Succulent Garden contains the largest outdoor collection of desert plants in the world containing about 2500 species covering twelve acres. You will be amazed to find plants pampered by you in greenhouses or pots growing luxuriously in the ground. Just as amazing are the numbers of individual varieties: there are literally hundreds of Golden Barrels alone. And not a weed in sight. One of the specialties are miniature succulents. Pamphlets invite you to take this "20 minute tour" - yet I have never been able to take in the entire desert garden during the three hours allotted to visitors. The Huntington Botanical Gardens are located in the township of San Marino, south of Pasadena. Follow directions from Huntington Drive. Open Tuesday through Sunday 1pm to 4:30 pm. Closed on Monday, major holidays, and the month of October. There is no charge. This sounds like a nice bustour for club members to take. If interested, why not contact Perlso Lewis.

The annual CSSA Show is coming up on the weekend July 4th, 1976. The theme this year is "Cactus Roundup".

Del Mar Fair time is approaching rapidly: June 22 through July 5, 1976. For further information call Perlso Lewis at 583-9085, after 5 pm.

Your Editor's Swansong: It has been 18 months of fun and hard work putting this monthly newsletter together. In particular, I want to thank Madelyn Lee and George Radwin for their time and efforts in contributing regularly to this publication by writing about the plants of the month. I really did appreciate the fact that their excellent articles arrived without fail. I would like to also thank the following people (in alphabetical order) for their contributions to Espinas y Flores during my tenor as editor: Audrey Johnson, Martin Mooney, Christel Pfeiffer, Reed Pierce and Edith Werner.

## THE BARTER BOX

Ruth Stanton still has clay pots which she must dispose of. Some new - some used; 4" to 8". Please call before 9 am or after dark: 1-729-6022 at 3156 Harding St., Carlsbad.

Charles Harbison is looking for CSSA Journal No. 1, 1973. Will trade or buy. Has duplicates of other CSSA Journals which he will trade. Contact George Radwin at the Natural History Museum 232-3821.

A new publication as of June 1976 is "Turtle Hobbyist", a guide for the care of turtles and tortoises most commonly kept in captivity. Those interested, please contact Christel Pfeiffer, 714-280-4444, 5163 E. Bedford Drive, San Diego, Ca. 92116.

## SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

### Officers

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### Garden Hints, cont'd:

Compressed peat discs are available on the market, already impregnated with fertilizer (Jiffy-7's, for example). When moistened by standing them in a shallow pan of water, they expand inside their net bags to one and three quarters inches in diameter by approximately two and one eighth inches in height; about seven times their dry volume. The top of the net bag container is then spread open, the top onehalf inch of peat is loosened with a letter-opener or knife tip and the seed or seeds planted in this ideal sterile medium. After the seeds have sprouted and their roots have filled the peat cup, the entire container is then planted directly into the appropriate container or in the ground. This eliminates the hazard of transplanting very young seedlings damaging them in the process. I have had very good luck in using these peat cups.

Augie Pfeiffer  
5163 E. Bedford Drive  
San Diego, Ca. 92116

Address correction requested