

ESPINAS Y FLORES

Ganna Walska LOTUSLAND



The Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Inc.
Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

Volume 39 Number 9
Saturday September 11th
Lotusland Bus Trip, Details Inside

Presidents Message

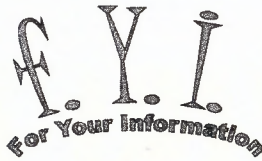
August 22, 2004

What a great Summer we are having! Warm breezy days and cool nights, - not too hot or too cold - many succulents are at their peak in our yard with lots of new growth and blooming. Our meeting last Saturday added to the enjoyment with lots of members present, lots of information, and some wonderful plants to see, buy, and win.

Though we don't like to think of them, insects are a fact of life when raising plants - thanks to Chris Miller for her enlightening article, and for leading an informative discussion so we could hear many points of view and strategies for dealing with the little pests. I think Jurgen made a great 'bottom line' point - the best intervention is prevention - healthy plants are least likely to host infestations, but if it happens, it is good to have a variety of tools available.... Our main presentation was also very informative, well organized, and beautiful. Thanks to Brian Kemble for a wonderful talk, accompanied by a very helpful chart of 'Hardy Aloes' with information on temperature ranges, and growing season. This will be a handy reference for growing these favorite plants. If you were not there and would like a copy of this list, please contact me. Brian's slide show was also a treat - showing the plants in cultivation as well as in habitat. Thanks Brian for an outstanding presentation!

There were some beautiful plants on the brag table - but not a single cac-

tus. I had two cactus to bring but they forgot to get in the van! So remember the 'Cactus' in our name and in October bring a cactus to show off! Another highlight of the meeting happened at the "Benefit Drawing Table." A long time member and Life Member, Beverly Kirkegaard, has donated much of her remaining collection to our Society. The first of those plants were available on the table and many people went away happy. I remember my first time at the June show, many years ago, walking around seeing so many fantastic plants, standing out in my mind were many hard to grow cactus, with blue ribbons and trophies, and the name "Kirkegaard." As I became more involved, I got to know Beverly as a meticulous grower, enthusiastic volunteer, conscientious board member, and all round wonderful person to know. She has served the society in many capacities, last serving as secretary when I first joined the board. I was impressed by her calm good humor in keeping up with some lively discussions. Though she has not able to attend meetings lately, she tells me reads the entire newsletter to keep up with our 'goings on.' Many, many thanks to Beverly, not only for the beautiful plants, but for all you have done over the years! More of Beverly's plants will be available at the October, so be sure to be there and get your chance to win one of these special plants.



AUGUST BRAG PLANT WINNERS

Recorded by Kay Quijada

Succulents

1st Place: Cotyledon sericea (Boegoeberg)
Andrew Wilson

2nd Place: Aloe X (no name - but highly desirable!)
Kelly Griffin

2nd Place: Tillandsia straminea
Kay Quijada

3rd Place: Adenium X Evelyn M.
Kelly Griffin

3rd Place: Tylecodon sp.
Kelly Griffin

Cactus Alas! NO Entries!

President's Message Continued

Remember : There is no regular meeting in September.

On the 11th of Sept. we are going on a bus trip to Lotusland. If you have not made a reservation, yet would like to go, you can call me to see if there are any cancellations. If you have made reservations and cannot make it, please let me know in case there are people who want to go.

Pam Badger pambadge@earthlink.net

LOTUSLAND

THE CREATION OF LOTUSLAND

Ralph Kinton Stevens, an important early nurseryman, had his family home and commercial nursery on the property that is now known as Lotusland from 1882 until his death in 1896. Many of the large palms and other trees on the estate date to this period. Long after his death, his widow sold the property to George Owen Knapp in 1913, who in turn sold it in 1916 to E. Palmer and Marie Gavit of New York.



The Gavit family owned the property from 1916 to 1938. Reginald Johnson designed the main residence for them in 1919 and it was remodeled and additional buildings designed by George Washington Smith in the 1920s. Mr. Smith also designed the

perimeter wall, the original swimming pool that is now the lotus pond, and adjacent bath house. The Gavits landscaped their estate, which they called Cuesta Linda, with extensive gardens, described in 1929 as "semi-formal Italian," with designers listed as Paul Theine and Peter Reidel. There is a very good possibility that Lockwood de Forest was also responsible for part of the designs.

Sir Humphrey O. Clarke, a British diplomat, bought Cuesta Linda from the Gavit estate in 1938. He and his family occupied the property from 1939 to 1941, making some architectural changes to the main residence. There is no record of changes or additions to the grounds.

Madame Ganna Walska, who purchased the estate from the Clarkes in 1941, made no major changes to the buildings on the estate. She did, however, make extensive and dramatic changes to the grounds. During the 43 years that she lived at Lotusland, Madame Walska redesigned most of the Gavit period landscaping, creating many new and wonderful gardens.

MADAME GANNA WALSKA

The woman who was to become the extraordinary Ganna Walska

had quite ordinary origins, born Hanna Puacz in 1887 in Brest-Litovsk, Poland. At the onset of her musical studies, Hanna Puacz took the stage name of Madame Ganna Walska -- Madame was the customary title for well-known actresses and operatic singers in Europe, Ganna is a Russian form of Hanna and Walska reminiscent of her favorite music, the waltz. Over the next decades she sang in New York and Paris and toured America and Europe, attracting the attention of audiences, critics, and gentleman admirers on both sides of the Atlantic. She married six times, wrote her memoirs, *Always Room at the Top*, and continued to study both vocal music and spiritual teachings in search of creative fulfillment and personal enlightenment.

THE CREATION OF LOTUSLAND

After residing in Paris and New York, Madame Walska turned her sights toward California's sunny climate and free-thinking residents. At the encouragement of Theos Bernard, her sixth and last husband, she purchased the 37-acre Cuesta Linda estate in Santa Barbara in 1941, intending to use it as a retreat for Tibetan monks, and renamed it "Tibetland." The Tibetan monks never appeared, and sometime later, after divorcing Bernard, Madame Walska changed the name of her estate to "Lotusland" in honor of the sacred Indian lotus growing in one of the ponds on the property. She thus began what would be a gradual transformation from well-known socialite to garden designer. Most of her energy and resources were poured into creating a botanical garden of rare plants using her natural artistic talents to create a fantasy world of exquisite beauty. To accomplish this she worked

with a number of landscape architects and designers, including Lockwood de Forest, Jr., Ralph T. Stevens, William Paylen, Oswald da Ros, and Charles Glass. She herself was a designer and loved to mass single species of plants together. She wanted the best, the biggest, and the most unusual plants available and was often willing to pay any price to get them. So determined was she to finish the work she had begun that in the 1970s she auctioned off some of her jewelry in order to finance her final creation -- the cycad garden. Up until the last few years of her life, she was the feisty, intractable "head gardener" of Lotusland. She died March 2, 1984 at Lotusland, leaving her garden and her fortune to the Ganna Walska Lotusland Foundation.



IN HER OWN WORDS

"My home in Santa Barbara is known as Lotusland. During the last 25 or more years I have greatly expanded

SDCSS ONLINE

Our New Communication Link



What is SDCSS Online

On August 14, 2004 the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society ventured into a new dimension of club activities. First through the portal was Andrew Wilson, Pam Badger followed quickly. Within a week seven SDCSS members were sharing the experience. What the heck is Bunch jabbering about now? I'm writing about SDCSS online, our internet mailing list.

What did these intrepid cyber-heroes find? Email! Oh no! All I need is more email. Ah... but this email is different. It's from people they know personally and about something they are really interested in, cacti and other succulents. But they found much more at the SDCSS · San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Yahoo Group webpage.

This group is much more than email. It's an interactive web page all about us and the plants we are interested in. As I write this article I'm online with

Andrew discussing how we could use SDCSS Online to make articles in Flores y Espinas more interesting and packed with more information.

In just seven days we have photos from the Summer Show, Plants and habitats available for your use. For those with a more technical bent files with genuine rainfall data for Karasberg, Namibia and other parts of Southern Africa. In addition, we have links to other email lists that specialize in the Crassulaceae, Haworthia and Gasteria, Adenium, mesembs and by the time you read this links to many more. There is also a link to a great site on the baobabs of the world. If this sounds a lot like the things I'm interested in, that's because I put them there. As a member of SDCSS Online you share your interests with everyone and I can tell you that the resulting conversations can be very interesting.

There's more. We have a calendar that sends club announcements and reminders

automatically. We have data-bases to keep information like flowering times; how well different fertilizers work and your recommendations, watering regimes, you name it. We can vote online or get together with our computers for a friendly online chat with members only or invite the world. How we use this resource is up to us.

How to Use SDCSS Online

The following instructions should be easy to use. However some of us don't use our computers much and will want help. At the October meeting I'll have a list of people that have volunteered to give personalized help. They will be called SDCSS Online Volunteers below.

First you need to register with Yahoo. Just fire up your web browser and go to <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/groups/groups-48.html>.

There you will see the following:
Registration

1. Click on the Registration link on any Yahoo! Groups page.
2. Complete the registration form and click on Submit This Form.

Note: The Yahoo! ID you choose must be unique. It does not need to match your email address.

3. You should receive an email confirming your registration. Make sure to record your Yahoo! ID and password. You will need these to sign into Yahoo! Groups.

Click on the underlined word Registration, and fill out the form that comes up. Write down your Yahoo ID and Password. You will forget them otherwise! At the very bottom of the registration form click the button that says "Submit This Form" and follow any instructions that come up.

Now there are two ways to join SDCSS Online. The easiest is to send me an email at pbunch@cox.net. I will send you an invitation. You will receive an email from SDCSS Online with easy to follow instructions. Pam Badger, another moderator or I will approve your subscription and you can start sending email to the group and use all the benefits I mentioned above.

If you feel comfortable navigating around the web, after registering with Yahoo just go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SDCSS/> and click the "Join This Group" button. Follow the instructions and within 24 hours a moderator will approve your subscription. We do this to keep membership to SDCSS members only for now. Later we will decide if we want to invite others to use our list.

If you have problems contact an SDCSS Online volunteer. It's that easy.

Phil Bunch

the 40 acres of this property, devoting myself exclusively to establish and increase the already valuable collection with great variety of species, such as Palms, Cycads, etc., from all around the world in a picturesque display and setting. Time and circumstances permitting, I dream that if given the opportunity, having considerable finances at my disposal, I might fulfill my work to develop Lotusland to its maximum capacity as the most outstanding center of horticultural significance and educational use."



Latitude: 34°26'N
Longitude: 119°39'W
Altitude: 450-540 ft.
Annual Normal Precipitation: 17.9 in.
Annual Normal Snowfall: 0
Mean Daily Temperature: 16.1° C
Normal Minimum Temperature: 6.2° C
Normal Maximum Temperature: 27.1° C
Historic Low Temperature: -2.2° C
Historic High Temperature: 42° C
USDA zone: 10

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

For the past 8 years, elementary and high school students have enjoyed free special guided educational tours and art classes at Lotusland. In 1998, Lotusland applied for and received a special grant for a pilot program of 4th grade education, with an introductory lesson in the classroom followed by a field trip to Lotusland. The tour, conducted by specially trained docents, reveals to local fourth graders the magical landscapes of Lotusland while teaching them about various rare and endangered plants.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Over 200 volunteers and docents share their time and talents with the staff at Lotusland throughout the year, staffing the garden shop, maintaining the grounds, assisting with office procedures, and leading tours of the garden. The various areas/departments described below are always in need of enthusiastic volunteers, eager to assist in the operation of a world-class organization. Docents lead tours of the historical Lotusland estate and its various gardens 9 months out of the year, interpreting the exotic plant collections for visitors. A bi-annual training program provides top-notch lectures and classes for those in the community who wish to volunteer to lead tours.

ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

Archival Volunteers sort, organize, label, file and photocopy archival materials. Knowledge of French, Russian, Polish, German or

Italian helpful. Library Volunteers assist with cataloguing, shelving and general upkeep of a small library (700 volumes). Minimum of two hours per week.

GARDEN/GIFT SHOP

Garden Shop Associates answer visitors' questions and welcome them to the gardens. Training is provided. The Garden Shop is open mid-February to mid-November, Wednesday through Saturday.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Grounds Volunteers work with gardening staff performing tasks such as watering, weeding, raking, digging, and planting. Minimum requirement of six hours per month.

OFFICE

Office Volunteers perform general office and clerical work such as typing, filing, photocopying, affixing mailing labels, sealing envelopes, mail metering and other tasks. Minimum of two hours per week.

Special Events

Special Event Facilitators work during member special events (up to 500 people) on an as-needed basis assisting with directing guests to a particular area of the garden (e.g. the theatre), setting up tables and chairs, helping with decorations, assisting with parking cars or other activities.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Often on short notice, Lotusland calls upon Special Project Volunteers for help with large mailings to members, picking fruit to donate to lo-

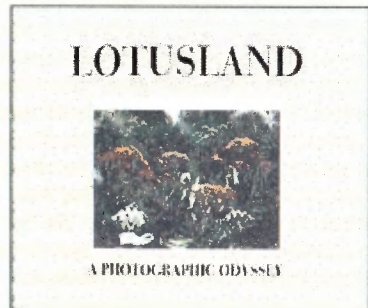
cal charities, or other such projects where more hands are better than fewer. Volunteers work on an "on call" basis. Time commitment varies.

VISITOR HOSPITALITY

Hospitality Volunteers coordinate welcome tables for botanical, horticultural and other VIP groups visiting the garden and assist with refreshments for various meetings and member events.



Ganna Waiska Lotusland
The Garden & Its Creators
Written by Sharon Crawford especially for Lotusland 1996
Photographs by Wm. B. Dewey
8 1/2" x 11", soft cover
Item #01-1 \$19.95



Lotusland- A Photographic Odyssey
Written by Theodore Gardner II
Photographs by Wm. B. Dewey,
Gregory Padgett, and
Robert Glen Ketchum
Allen A. Knoll, Publishers 1995
10" x 11 1/4", hard cover
Item #01-2 \$68.00

Growing Euphorbia Millii Hybrids in Vietnam

By Nguyen Phu Anh Tuan, Danang Cactus Club, Danang, Vietnam

In Vietnam some varieties of *Euphorbia mili* Ch. des Moulin, with red, yellow and pink flowers, can be found growing wild on the dry mountain slopes where soil is poor. Local people call these plants by the Vietnamese name of "Xuong Ran", which means "Snake's back bone". and collect them for their homes, where they are grown on balconies in containers or in the garden. These plants have a sprawling growth habit. People believe that having them in their homes helps to give protection from ghosts and other evils.

In 1995 our diplomats brought hybrids of *E. mili* into our country from Thailand, where they were grown in the King of Thailand's palace and were valued almost as much as orchids. Gradually the trend of growing this Madagascan euphorbia spread throughout Vietnam and eventually some 70 varieties were introduced. The Vietnamese name of "Bat Tien" meaning "eight fairies", is given to the hybrids, the name being taken the fact that often the flowers are grouped in eights. "Bat Tien" differ from "Xuong Ram" in that "Bat Tien" has a vertical growth habit and has, larger leaves and stems, The flowers are very attractive.

From 1995 to 1996 people in Vietnam grew only varieties of *E. mili* with small flowers [up to 10 mm in diameter], the colours being red, yellow pink and orange, then from 1997 to 1998, hybrids with medium sized flowers [up to 20 mm in diameter] and a wide range of forms and colours were grown, many being imported from Thailand. From 1999 onwards even larger growing hybrids, with flowers of up to, 60 mm in diameter, were imported from Thailand, but although these plants are larger in stem size and leaf, their colouration is not so varied. Undoubtedly "Bat Tien" is the most popular plant of the new millennium as far as Vietnamese growers of cacti and succulents are concerned and, with their attractive flowers, the hybrids are considered most desirable. In some cities of the country exclusive "Bat Tien" clubs have been formed and these clubs organize shows and competitions to take place at the Lunar New Year.

Flowers of Bat Tien:

Colour:.

There is a very wide range of colours, from white to yellow, pink, green to orange, from red to multi coloured hybrids. These hybrids can be pink-white with a red spot, yellow with green stripes, pink with a red border, white with a pink border, etc. Even in flowers of the same colour, the colour of the stamens may differ.

Form:

There are many variations of form, some flowers being boat-shaped, some looking like apricot flowers and some being twisted. The diameter of the flowers also varies. In healthy plants a succession of flowers is maintained and they hang around the pot and look very beautiful like orchid flowers.

Cultivation:

We use two soil combinations

1. 30% dry cow manure
30% rice husk ash
40% sand & Clay mix
2. 15% dry nut husk
35% rice husk ash
40% sand & clay mix
10% biological fertilizer

Propagation:

Growing from seed is a slow process and seedlings take a long time to mature. We find that growing from cuttings is best. We dry the cuttings for about 4 days and then plant them in suitable soil and they root in about 7 to 10 days. We have also tried grafting to produce a plant with many differently coloured branches, but, although successful, the resulting plant was ugly and unattractive.

Fertilizer:

We often use NPK 10.30.30, and also have very good results with NPK 16.16.8.13S. If we use DAP it makes plants branch very freely which is useful for propagation purposes.

Watering:

In the tropical climate of Vietnam we need to water our outside plants daily in summer. With so much sunshine and plenty of water the plants grow well and produce flowers over a long period. Plants grown indoors leaf more, not do not flower so well and the colour of the flowers is not so good.

Upcoming Events

2004

August 14-15 Houston C&SS Annual Show and Sale. Free Admission to (judged) show of cacti and succulents. Rare and unusual plants for sale. Children's drawing contest (prizes!). Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Dr, Houston, Texas. Hours 10am-5pm each day. Contact Hank Andresen for more details. Tel: 713-436-1734 or e-mail him at hand1609@hotmail.com

August 20 - 22 14th Eastern C&S Conference at the DoubleTree Guest Suites in Plymouth Meeting PA. Hosted by the Philadelphia C&SS. While you're there, enjoy Longwood Gardens and Morris Arboretum, world-class museums and a brand new baseball stadium. For more info contact Co-chairpersons, Rita Hojnowski 856-227-0599 ritahoj@comcast.net or Elayne Toizer e-mail: atoizer@aol.com or tel: 215-233-2965 Succulent Lovers, Unite!!!

August 21: British C&SS National Show, Spalding Exhibition Centre, Springfield, Spalding, Lincs, England.

September 4: 21st Huntington Symposium at Huntington Botanical Gardens.

September 5: CSSA Board Meeting, Huntington Botanical Gardens. (Ahmanson Classroom).

Mid-October: CSSA Tour to Chile, home to Copiapoa, Eriosyce, Eulychnia and others. See itinerary in last issue of To The Point.

2005

January 15: CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

April 16: CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

July 1 - 3: CSSA Annual Show and Sale at Huntington Botanical Gardens

August 5 - 11: CSSA 31st Biennial Convention, Scottsdale Plaza Resort, Phoenix, Arizona Host Club: The Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society Special Rate for Rooms \$89 per night (Normally \$300)

Convention Chairman, Duke Benadom Program Chairman, Leo Martin e-mail: leo1010@attglobal.net Confirmed speakers already include Sheila Collenette, Chuck Hanson, John Lavranos, Mark Muradian, Gard Roper, Guy Wrinkle.

2006

January 14 CSSA Board Meeting, Ahmanson Class Room, HBG

April 15 CSSA Board Meeting, Ahmanson Class Room, HBG

June 30 - July 2 CSSA Show and Sale, HBG

August 17 - 20 British C&SS International Convention at Loughborough University in England. Speakers from Argentina, Australia, South Africa and the USA already confirmed. For further details contact David Kirkbright, 71 Lakes Lane, Newport Pagnell, MK16 8HT, England, or e-mail at: Kirkbright@bcandss.fsnet.co.uk

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Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
San Diego, CA
Permit No. 737

Espinas & Flores

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Brag Table: Shirley Berry & Kay Quijada
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Susan Hopkins
Winter Show: Ed DeLollis
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Liaison
Balboa Park Desert Garden: Susan Hopkins
CSSA Affiliate Rep: Kelly Griffin
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