

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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September, 1978.

SEPTEMBER MEETING DATE:

Saturday, September 9th, 1978.

PROGRAM:

ON SAFARI IN AFRICA.

The September program will be provided by Martin Mooney, whose lecture, with slides, will be concerned with his recent trip to Africa. For those of us who have not been fortunate enough to make this trip, this should be an exciting experience!

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Note From M.E. (Geoff Johnson)

Ye Lady Ed. & I are taking off in the early part of October to pursue another of our consuming interests, (Dixieland Jazz), at the Ojai Jazz Festival. Consequently, we will have to ensure the early preparation of the October Issue.

We request the co-operation of our contributors in helping us by meeting the deadline of SEPTEMBER 19th. THANK-YOU !!!!

Cactus-of-the-Month

Uebelmannia

Dr. Ronald E. Monroe

Although one species of this very handsome genus has been known since 1938 (as Parodia gummifera), most were not discovered until 1966; the genus per se was erected in 1973 by Buining in honor of W. Uebelmann.

The plants occur in isolated populations in quite inaccessible terrain in Minas Geraes, Brazil, at rather low elevations (ca. 1000-1300 m) and are found growing in rock crevices containing quartz sand. The plants may be covered, in part, by lichens and/or bromeliads.

The genus is a relatively small one containing only about six species and one or two varieties. The plants are spherical to cylindrical and simple for the most part although some individual plants are known to produce small offsets near the middle of the body. The ribs are straight and pleated (accordion-like) and the podaria quite small and numerous. The spines are variable ranging from erect, straight projections much like the crest of some ancient Roman military helmet (U. pectinifera), very minute spines in closely set arioles (U. pectinifera v. elegans) to stout, long gray-black spines (U. warasii).

The flowers are borne on young arioles in the top center of the plants; they are rather small and yellow in color. Thus, collectors obtain these plants for the plant alone and not for showy flowers (which is as it should be!).

Because this genus is relatively new to cultivation, much information concerning their culture and propagation is not yet known. However, it can be accurately stated that most plants in collections are field-collected. Too, those plants are extremely difficult to establish often taking up to six months to respond and grow new roots (nearly 25 percent will die!). They do like heat and humidity; twice daily misting of the plants is advisable and more water than average during the growing period is beneficial. Because they are found naturally in very porous quartz sand, one should use more sand in their potting mix and a clay pot is very advisable. Heavy feeding is not necessary and propagation is by seed (the plants can be induced to offset by topping; however, the offsets root only rarely so grafting them is essential!). One complaint often heard is that plants that are grown from seed do not possess the deeply pleated ribs of those obtained from the field. This problem has yet to be validly explained.

References

- Backeberg, Curt. 1977. Cactus Lexicon. Blanford Press, England.
Buining, A. F. H. 1973. Succulenta. November.

The Nature Conservancy

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June 23, 1978

Dear Friends:

As Director of The Nature Conservancy's Western operations, I personally want to express my appreciation for your generous \$28.62 gift to the Santa Cruz Island project. In my opinion, the acquisition of the Island represents perhaps the most important private conservation effort ever undertaken in the West.

Thank you for helping the Conservancy insure that Santa Cruz Island will be preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of those who treasure this country's natural heritage.

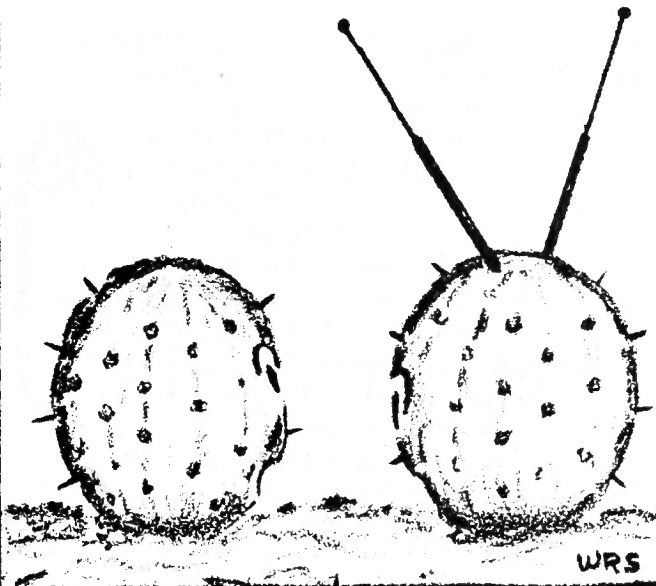
Sincerely,



Henry P. Little
Western Regional Director

Are you growing
what I think
they are----
superspines?

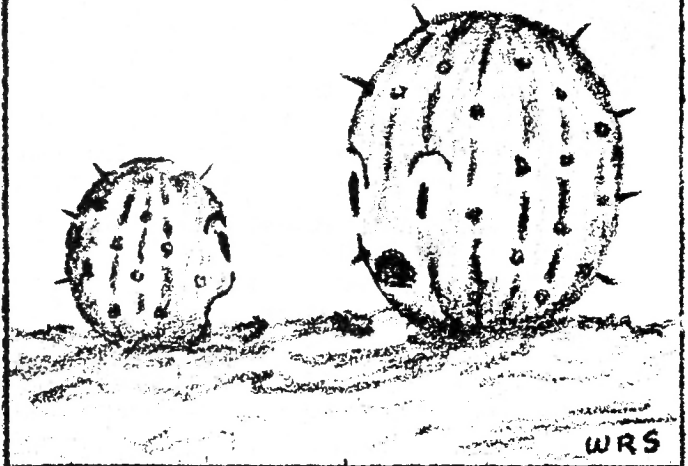
They're antennas.
I enjoy listening
to radio talk
shows.



SUPERSPINES?

Mom, what's
the difference
between a rose
and a cactus?

It depends on who you
ask Junior. A rose
says "A cactus is a
fear and a fright
and a rose is a dream
and a delight."



A ROSE OR A CACTUS?

SUCCULENT-OF-THE-MONTH

Ceropegia

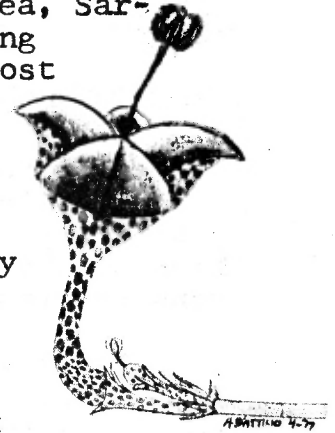
by Rick Latimer

The family Asclepiadaceae (Silkweeds or Milkweeds) includes, among other plants, three succulent groups. One group contains small stellar flowers and includes such genera as Fockea, Sarcostemma, Hoya, and Dischidia. We will plan on covering these in 1980. Next year we will do the largest and most succulent group-the Stapeliads (Starfish flowers).

This year we will do the "bird cage" flowered Asclepiads which are the genera Cynanchum, Brachystelma, and Ceropegia. There is some disagreement as to the derivation of the name Ceropegia; Woods gives "strong horns", but we (CSSAJ) tend to agree with C. Chicheley Plowden's "wax fountain". Another view (Radwin and D'Attilio) states that it was named for its supposed resemblance of its flowers to drops or blobs of wax. My dictionary states that ceros (Greek) does indeed mean wax. Interesting enough, the Latin word for wax is cere (as in Cereus and cere perdue), but applied to Zoology means "a soft swollen area". Brachy means abnormally shortened. Stelma was not defined, but perhaps it means stem. Cyn is defined to mean "dog", an "without", and chum as "chamber". However, I doubt that Cynanchum was invented to have these words in mind.



Ceropegia woodii: flower ca. 25mm. much enlarged



Ceropegia distincta var. *haygarthii*

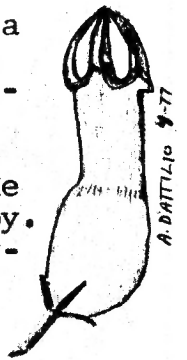
As far as foliage goes, there are in Ceropegia both herbaceous (C. deightonii) and succulent (C. stapeliaeformis) species, climbers (C. ampliata), hangers (C. woodii), and erect (C. dichotoma)*, some species have tuberous roots (C. cafforum) and others just standard roots (C. fusca)*, and finally species with large leaves (C. lugardae) to those often described as leafless. The most common Ceropegia is undoubtedly the houseplant known as the "Rosary vine" or "String of Hearts"-C. woodii. The leaves consist of silver spots on the dark green leaves that may take up most of the front of the leaf if given enough light.

The vegetative forms of the plants are not all that interesting, but the wide range of floral shapes steal the show. Some rather odd color combinations turn-up including creme, greens, browns, maroon, and black. The corolla has a tube of variable length which is usually inflated at the base, then contracted above and tubular and gradually dilated to its mouth, and usually hairy within.

From the mouth of the tube there is a division into five lobes which form the typical 'bird cage', are free at the tips (C. stapeliaeformis), or form an umbrella-like canopy. Like some of the Stapeliads, some of the Ceropegia flowers have a peculiar smell. This scent attracts flies into the tube, but the internal hairs point downward keeping the flies in until the flowers wilt, letting the fly out, presumably with pollen. For pollination



Ceropegia saundersonii



Ceropegia ampliata

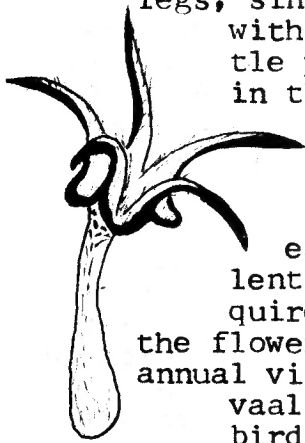
to be successful a liberated fly must enter another Ceropegia flower. We must assume the flies do not get too upset.

(4)

* in which the nostrils open, in birds of prey and parrots
** WINTER ACTIVE, SUMMER DORMANT, MOST CEROPEGIAS ARE THE REVERSE.

Species range from the Canary Islands (remember Shirley Berry's C. fusca from January?), Ghana (C. linophyllum), South Africa (most including C. distincta var. haygarthii), Kenya (C. galeata), Somalia and Arabia (C. de vechii), Yemen (remember John Pashek's C. Lavranos #), and West India (C. bulbosa).

Cynanchums are usually straggly, succulent vines of little interest. However, C. marnierianum from Madagascar, can make a beautiful basket plant. To me, the stems look like purple crab legs, since they consist of twigs of roughened, wrinkled texture with gouty, swollen nodes. The flowers are delightful little yellow-green cages. There is no bird small enough to fit in these or any of those of the plant of this month. As far as I know, both Cynanchum and Brachystelma flowers do not have the swollen base and long tube of Ceropegia.



C. stapeliiformis

Whereas most Ceropegias and Cynanchums are of fairly easy culture, the Brachystelmas with their large, succulent tubers are a bit more touchy to over-watering and require a complete rest from the time the leaves drop until the flowers appear. B. pygmaeum (Cape provence) has a delicate annual vine with linear leaves in Summer. B. barberae (Transvaal) has rather putrid smelling inflorescences of purple bird cages, but these bird cages look like Stapelia flowers in the middle at the bottom. If we look at the flowers of B. perditum (Lesotho) they are very star fish like. One might be tempted to call Ceropegia conrathii a Brachystelma, because it just consists of a tuber, a short stem, a few leaves, and flowers. However, these flowers have a swollen base and a long tube. I am told by Betty Athy that at this years CSSA Show, there was a "plant" entered by Woody Minnich of Los Angeles called Pseudo-brachystelma invalida. This plant squeaked when touched. It was actually a dog wistle!

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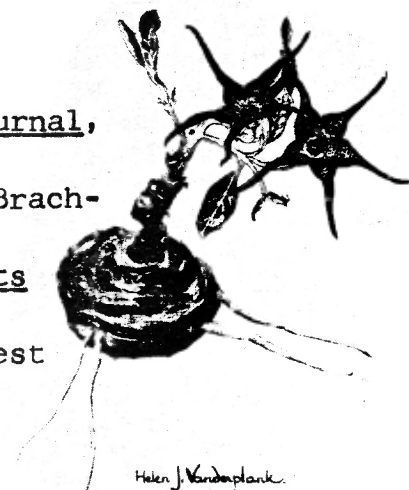
Dyer, R. A., "Ceropegias in South Africa", CSSA Journal, V. XXXVII # 3, p. 61-71.

Dyer, R. A., "The Changing Scene of Ceropegia and Brachystelma", CSSA Journal, V. L #3, p. 112-114.

Glass, Charles & Robert Foster, Cacti and Succulents for the Amateur, p. 64.

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Radwin, George E., "Ceropegia", CSSA Journal, V. XLIX # 4, p. 145-148.



Helen J. Vanderplank

Brachystelma perditum

P.S. More corrections: 1. I believe I said in the June issue that the Dudleya we saw up at Culp Camp growing only in quartz dikes was D. edulis. More likely it was D. saxosa. 2. The sentence: If Conophytums are the Queen of Winter...should have continued: then Lithops is the King of the Summer.

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SUMMER!
(FOR GARDENING? NO, FOR SWIMMING!!)

Audrey Johnson

Since I am not having much success with gardening this year - apart from almost perpetual irrigation - my "editorial" is rapidly becoming a sort of diary of this year's activities. But then, isn't it always!

With Geoff on a kind of "fix-it" vacation this past two weeks, and friends over from England for the whole month of August, I really haven't had much time for gardening anyway. One of the gardening "fix-it" jobs which Geoff has been attempting is that of getting a sprinkler system going up our hillside garden in our one-time gully - no easy task. As we have a minimum of earth, with hard rock underneath, getting the pipes installed (without looking too conspicuous) is quite a problem, but, as usual, he is performing miracles!:

As a matter of interest, my friends from England are here on one of those house (and car) swapping deals between England and the United States, and the whole thing seems to be working out fine. Last week Jan (a friend of mine when we both lived in Ohio) was interviewed by the San Diego Union, and, a few days later, we were all interested to read an article in that newspaper about similar arrangements, with pictures of Jan's mother and friends waiting at a busstop while on one of their almost daily shopping sprees. I must admit that the whole business appears to be working out very well - it sounds like quite an idea!

One of the most interesting (although wearying) trips that we made with our English friends was a day spent at Universal Studios. Surprisingly enough, apart from the fascinating technical details which were expounded to us, there were certain aspects of the tour which appealed to the gardener in me. We are most of us all too well aware that many of the most spectacular effects we enjoy are mere tricks of the camera. Many of these they explained to us in detail, and they were somewhat disillusioning. However, some of the effects which were obtained with trees, plants, and plantings, really impressed me. Enormous petrified trees, huge potted palms etc. could be put into place in a matter of minutes (almost), and lo! - instant jungle!: It occurred to me how useful this would be for we poor gardening souls who struggle through our intensely hot, dry Summers here in Escondido, with their brilliant sunshine and drying winds. A hillside jungle - how interesting! If only one had the material, money, time and manpower to achieve that instant effect, it would be so easy. But then again, it is nice to watch one's plants and plantings grow and mature, however slowly...

About the Birds:

Hopefully (and perhaps prematurely) I have an announcement to make regarding our little zebra finches! Mike, from his high vantage point, peered down into their nest last week, and, to everyone's delight, espied four tiny eggs nestled inside. Great was our jubilation, needless to say, and already I am beginning to feel like the "grandmother" of quads! I must add that, since then, our ding-a-ling parent finches have packed more nesting material on top of the eggs, and I am now worried in case the baby birds (when and if they hatch) will get suffocated. I think I'll have to ask some of my more knowledgeable bird fancier friends about this. I wonder if Warren could help me?

Needless to say, if we have a birth in the family before going to press, there will be a Stop Press Announcement in the bulletin. After all, it is our first baby (bird)!

Ye Lady Ed.

REGALEMENT FOR SEPTEMBER.

The following members have volunteered to bring the refreshments for our September meeting:-

Marsha Hammecher
Barbara McCall
Robert Hewitt
Jean Hapeman
Wally Musser

Leroy Phelps
Estelle Viertel
Marsha Monree
Kathryn McDonald
Ethel Standish

"BEAUTY AND THE BEAST" SHOW
AT THE WILD ANIMAL PARK.

We hope to make this year's "Beauty and the Beast" Show at the Wild Animal Park more exciting and extensive than ever. It will take place on Saturday and Sunday, October 7th and 8th.

There will be award winning exhibits in four sections:

Garden Clubs
Plant Societies
Commercial
Single Exhibits

Individual awards will be made, plus top awards and sweepstakes.

Any further information may be obtained from Warren Buckner or John Pasek. Details will be given out at the meeting.

Ye Lady Ed.

SALE OF PLANTS AT THE HOME OF
WALLY MUSSER, ONE OF OUR MEMBERS.

Wally has some 6 to 700 beautiful potted plants of cacti and succulents, at his home, to be disposed of immediately. There is also a 15 to 20-limbed ocotillo in the ground, and many other fascinating items.

To contact Wally for an appointment to view his plants, please use the following telephone numbers:-

Home No. 566-6971 - Any time after 6 o'clock in the evening,
or on weekends.
Office No. 294-4749 During the daytime.

The Plant Sales Committee would like to thank the following people for their recent contributions to the sales table: Ron Ulman, Shirley Berry, Joan Johnson, Bill Nelson, Bob Taylor, and The Plant Place.