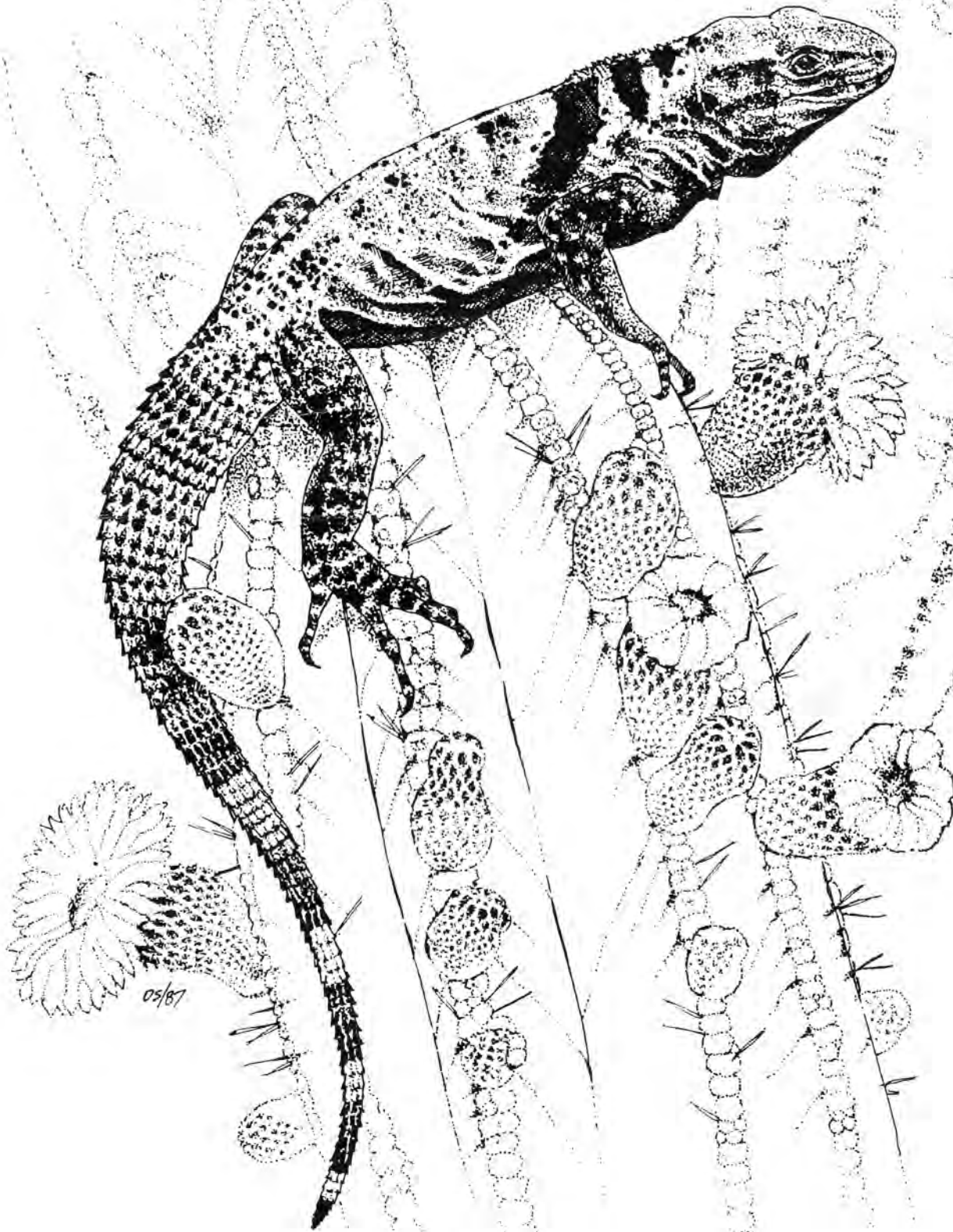


ESPINAS Y FLORES

Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society, Inc.

Affiliated with the Cactus and Succulent Society of America

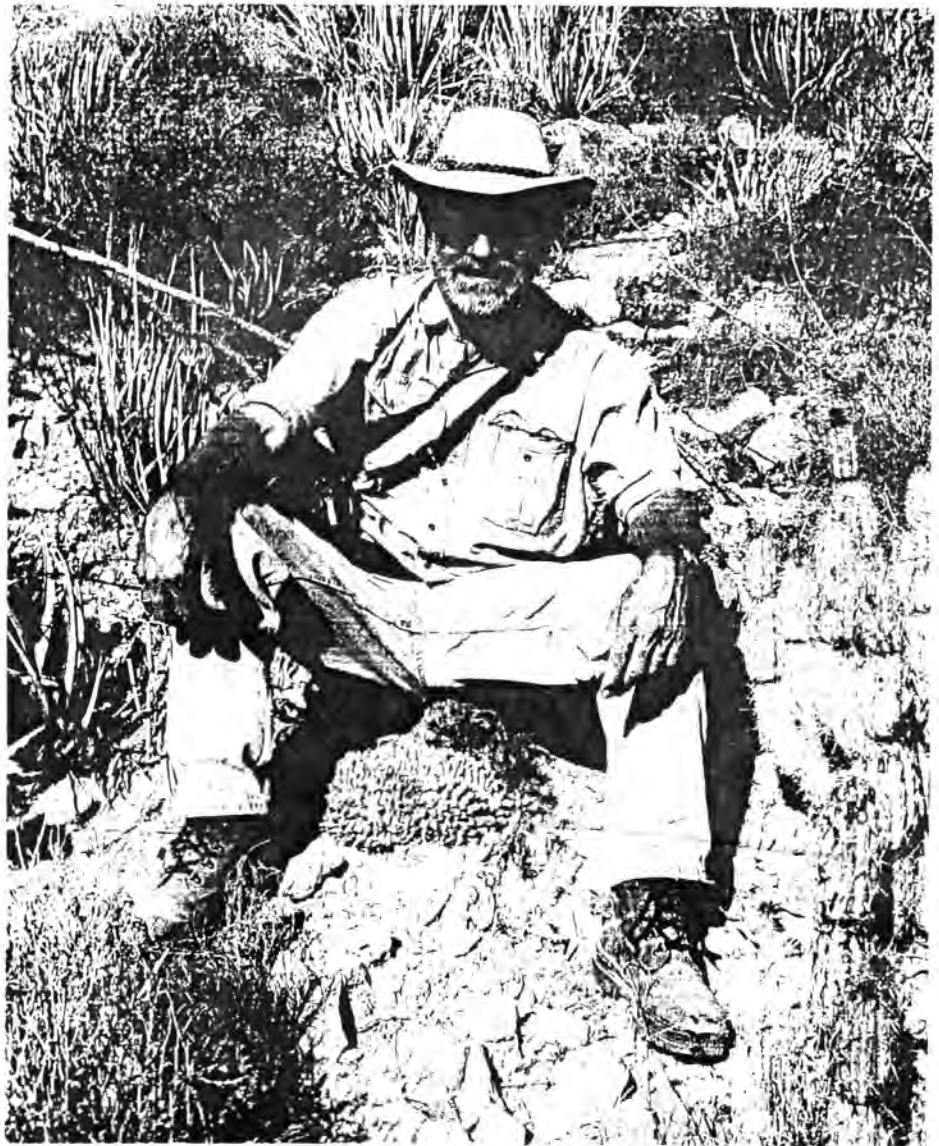
Volume 34, Number 10, Meeting: Saturday November 13 at 1:00 PM



RARE CACTI OF MEXICO

Plant explorer extraordinaire **Woody Minnich**, will be giving a slide presentation of a book in progress on the rare cacti of Mexico. He is well known to our members for offering rare and unusual plants for sale through his business **Cactus Data** and giving outstanding presentations in the past. This show will be no different. With more than 100 visits to Mexico you will see plants and places that few have ever seen. Woody's photographic images are artistic and capture the uniqueness of the plants in their habitat. Don't miss this presentation. **1:00 PM November 13, 1999 Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park.**

The photograph at the right shows Woody sitting above a fantastic *Ariocarpus fissuratus* crest in habitat. See his article on page 9.



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

Tom Knapik 4669, 71 Street, La Mesa, CA 91941
Phone 619-462-1805 Fax 858-569-8510 E-mail eyf2000@aol.com

Newsletter submissions are due before the 14th each month

Unless other arrangements are made

Espinas y Flores, the newsletter of the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society, Incorporated, P.O. Box 33181, San Diego, CA 92163-3181, is published monthly with the exception of a combined May-June issue (11 issues per year). Newsletter circulation is approximately 350, with an additional 20-30 issues going to educational institutions, botanical societies, cactus and succulent nurseries, local publications, related natural history events, exhibits, and other interested groups or individuals upon request. Subscriptions are \$10 per year for bulk mail within the U.S.A.

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Past Presidents' Message



The October meeting was great! **Pam Bager** and **Joyce** and **Michael Buckner** gave informative talks on Melocactus and Pachyphytums and their kin. Thanks for the wonderful articles in the newsletter all of you. Our vendors also did a great job of offering some real unusual and quality plants this month.

One area that could be improved though, is "Name that Succulent" participation. Less than 10 names were entered. **Kelly Griffin** (the winner) got 5 free benefit plant tickets and sure enough his ticket was drawn. He went up and selected a choice plant from the table FREE! Play along and it might be you next time. This month's picture is on the back page.

The featured event was **Dorothy Byer** and **Betty Athy's** trip to South Africa. These two gals managed to stay out of trouble and explore the western side of South Africa for 7 weeks. Dorothy's great slides and dry humor kept the audience glued to the screen. What an adventure!



We normally would have an election at the November meeting for the new board members. The nominating

committee came up with 6 names and since there are 6 positions, the slate just needs to be approved by the members. The list includes; **Pam Badger, Ed DeLollis, Joe Kraatz, Spencer Maze, Terry Parr, and Kelly Parrott**. After they are sworn in, if you have any issues that you want discussed at the executive board meetings, please let them know or show up yourself, all members are always welcome.

The December meeting will be a **BIG** party, so keep the 11th open. It's the last club function of the millenium so don't miss out. Details will be discussed at the November meeting and published in the December newsletter. Also, plan ahead for our winter show on Jan 8, 2000. The winter growing succulents should be at their peak by then, so bring in those wonderful plants to share. **Steve Hammer** will be our distinguished host. He recently returned from South Africa himself with plenty of interesting stories to tell I'm sure. Anyone interested in selling plants should contact our show chair **Ed DeLollis** (his phone number is on the back).

There is a lot going on in our club in the next few months. The more you get involved with these activities, the more fun it will be for everyone. Be a part of the action.

Cover Page: I want to thank **Chris Tratnyek** for loaning us the original artwork for the cover. Audubon artist, **David Stump**, drew it from a photograph she took in Baja years ago. The lizard is a Peninsula Spiny Tailed Iguana, *Ctenosaura hemilopha*. It's on a Cardon cactus, *Pachycereus pringlei* because this species is a vegetarian and loves the thick white petals of the flower.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

— 1999 —

☒ NOVEMBER

- 13-14 Taste of Borrego is scheduled for this weekend. It is getting late but contact them, see FYI on the previous page if you are interested.
- 19 Cactus and Succulent Society of Hawaii Ward Warehouse Show, call Nathan Wong, 808-522-7063, for more information.
- 27 The Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society is having a fall Plant Show and Sale. Open to all. Call Stan Yalof at 760-743-1560 for more details (see page 15 for the announcement).

☒ DECEMBER

- 11 SDCSS Holiday Dinner Noon to 5:00 PM. (see FYI for a bit more information).

— 2000 —

☒ JANUARY

- 8 SDCSS 3rd Annual Winter Show and Sale 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Call Ed. DeLollis, 760-945-7892

☒ FEBRUARY

- 25-28 Southeastern Conference Info. SFCSS Inc., PO Box 161407, Miami FL 33116, e-mail sflacactus@aol.com

☒ MARCH

- 21 Midwest C&SS Show & Sale, Botanical Garden of Greater Cleveland, Noon to 5:00 PM Call Penny Chaikin for more info., 216-381-2525, 1556 Sheffield Rd., South Euclid OH 44121

☒ APRIL

- 8-16 CSSA Tour 2000, a field trip to the Big Bend, TX region. Info. Borderland Tours, 2550 W. Calle Padilla, Tucson AZ 85745, 800-526-7753. Last Call - It may be booked up?

☒ May

- 5-7 Sonoran 3 Conference, Tucson CSS, info Cactus Carol Clapp, e-mail kitfox@azstarnet.com, fax 520-908-0396.

☒ June

- 9-11 Mid America Conference, host Henry Shaw CSS, Viking Conference Center, St. Louis MO. Info, Kathy Malon, e-mail katmalon@world.att.net, or Pat Thomann, 3447 dunnica, St. Louis, MO 63118, 314-773-2931.

☒ July

- 1-2 CSSA Show & Sale, Huntington Botanical Gdns, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA

FOR MORE C&S INFO. SEE: WWW.CACTUS-MALL.COM/CSSA/EVENTS.HTML OR WWW.CACTUS-MALL.COM/EVENTS.HTML

The Monthly Benefit drawing

Here's the list of generous donors that helped us gain \$54 from our October benefit drawing.....

Carol Jean Wolcott—*Euphorbia milli* and *Aechmea recurvata* v. *ortegesii*, Shirley Berry—T-shirt with cactus motif, Joe Quijada—terra cotta pot, Kaija Marcon—San Diego Zoological/Wild Animal Park Passes, Joyce Buckner—*Pachyphytum* in "Tex" Pot, and 4 small succulent of the month plants) sorry, they didn't have labels and were last, minute additions. Dorothy Byer.—*Aloe pillansii*, and *Cyphostemma elephantopus*, Betty Athy—*Lachenelia* 'Romanus', *Fenestraria aurantiaca*, and *Euphorbia tirucalli* 'Flame'. Hope you don't have any questions, 'cause I probably don't know anymore than this!

Thanks, *Kay Quijada*

FYI FYI FOR YOUR INFORMATION FYI FYI

- ⇒ The **SDCSS Holiday Party** is approaching again. We will have a catered Dinner and will continue the tradition of bringing in our own deserts. Everything will be as usual. Please plan to attend on December 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
- ⇒ The **San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM)** has started its 125th year! There are many special events planned through the next 11 months (the celebration started on Oct. 21) and ends in October of 2000. For a listing of events see the web page: www.sdnhm.org (nice page layout) or call 619-232-0248.
- ⇒ Speaking of the **SDNHM**, there will be several hikes of interest offered by the **Canyoneers** (a volunteer group sponsored by the museum. On Saturday November 13 from 1:00 to 2:30 PM there will be a walk to William Heise County Park and on Nov. 20 there will be a new program and hike to Sloan Canyon, this hike will be from 9:00 AM–Noon. For more information call 619-232-3821 x 7 and request the 1999–2000 Free Guided Nature Walks Brochure.
- ⇒ Are you going to be in Hawaii in November? If you are out there in the weekend of Nov. 20 be sure to visit the **Cactus and Succulent Society of Hawaii's** first Show at the Ward Warehouse. Call **Nathan Wong**, 808-522-7063, for more information.
- ⇒ The **Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society** will be sponsoring a fall Plant Show: open to all on November 27 at the Joslyn Center, Escondido. Easy viewing, of unusual and traditional awards, with emphasis on interesting plants, not on occasional blemishes; something for all participants; novice, expert, and people's choice categories; extra points for cacti. People that want to enter plants should be there by 10:30 AM. Produced by **Stan Yalof** and **Dennis Miller**, please call 760-743-1560 for more details **NOTE: SEE THE INSIDE BACK PAGE OF THIS ISSUE FOR MORE DETAILS.**
- ⇒ "Name this succulent!" got a winner! Congratulations go to **Kelly Griffin**, he won five benefit plant drawing tickets. He guessed correctly: *Dracena draco*, the specimen pictured is of a plant at the Wild Animal Park, near the Bazaar in the village. Take a look at this month's plant and see if you can guess what it is.
- ⇒ In the October issue of the *Communique*, the newsletter of the **San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society**, there is a nice write-up on their speaker for October, **Tom Knapik**. Tom talked about his trip to Europe. We were lucky to be the first audience to see this collection of slides of the cactus and succulent collections of European cactophiles.
- ⇒ **Quail Botanical Gardens** is moving in on its goal to make a **Children's Garden**. Please call and find out what you can do to help, the number is 760-436-3036. Even though the garden may not have some of our spiny plants there are some fabulous succulents that are very 'petable'!
- ⇒ Taste of Borrego is scheduled for November 13 and 14 this year. It is getting late but write, the **Anza-Borrego Foundation** at P.O. Box 2001, Borrego Springs, CA 92004, call (760) 767-0446, or FAX (760) 767-0465, or e-mail info@theabf.org. There is also a nice web page at www.theabf.org. There will be food in the evening, and trips planned for the day. This year will be the start of a "Treasure Hunt". This new event will start at 8:00 AM and go till 2:00 PM. Good luck.
- ⇒ The **San Diego Horticultural Society** is sponsoring a garden tour on November 20. From 9:30AM–12:30PM there are four gardens to choose from: **Erik and Irina Gronborg** (SDCSS members), Agatha Youngblood, Donna and Bruce Hubbard and **Susi and Jose Torre-Bueno** (Susi is the SDHS Editor). From 12:30–3:30 PM you may visit Jim and Barbara Hartung, Jim and Lise Wright and Christine and Tom Wotruba's garden. These times are firm, no stragglers or early arrivals please! The cost is \$15.00 to SDHS members and \$18.00 for others. Parking and tickets are limited: Call 760-752-1585 or E-mail jmcgee@utm.net, **act now!**
- ⇒ **SDCSS Winter Show reminder:** Please get those winter growing and flowering plants groomed and growing. We are looking to a bigger and better show than our previous events. The show will be January 3, 2000! Call Ed DeLollis for details and offer to help, see calendar on previous page.
- ⇒ Don't forget **Christmas on the Prado** this year December 3 and 4. Bundle up and come to Balboa Park on December 3 & 4.
- ⇒ The Garden Celebration at the Wild Animal Park went well this year. The Baja and Old World Succulent Garden volunteers managed to add \$200 to the account. Thanks to, **Frank Thrombley**, **Carl McLeod** and **Ron Austin** for caring for and repotting plants, and **Paul Steward** for helping with the sales. Go out and see the mums at the Park and take a look at the succulent gardens.

GLEANINGS FROM THE INTERNET

Hello,

I have been unsuccessfully searching the internet trying to identify a cactus I have lovingly cared for nearly 15 years. I know little or nothing about cactus and I'm certain that is the problem. Pair that with all the Latin and you get nowhere on the cactus-super-highway!

When given to me, this cactus was called a Madagascar palm. Although my search did take me to many Madagascar palm sites, they were all "palm trees". I know it is not a palm tree, although it had a nice tuft of beautiful, long, slender leaf sprouting from the top of it and arching over in the appearance of a palm tree, up until recently. The stalk is tall, straight, round and covered with spikes like an ordinary looking cactus.

I would greatly appreciate any guidance you can give me as to how I can identify this cactus and where I would go for information on it's care.

Thank you for your time, Mary

Mary,

Unfortunately you have discovered one of the problems with common names. Though you may not like it, the Latinized names do come in handy. One of the rules of botanical nomenclature states that no name can be used more than once. A handy thing in this internet era.

The Madagascar Palm you refer to is not actually a Palm at all, but a *Pachypodium*. Pachypodiums are

members of the Periwinkle family, with five petals and a complex pollination system. I won't go into the family but I will mention about the Genus *Pachypodium*. The genus refers to the shape of the stems of these plants. It translates to thick foot, and gives information about the thickened base of the plant. We grow these outside, in the ground and the base of the stems get quite thick and enlarged. These enlarged stems are probably an adaptation to drought.

The whole name of the plant that you may have could be *Pachypodium lamerei*. This plant was named for a person. If my memory serves me right, this was a French Botanist of the 1800s that did some early botanizing in Madagascar. I believe the term "Madagascar Palm" is just a marketing ploy to give these very attractive plants a name that anyone could remember, I understand that *Pachypodium* does not go over so well. I for one am glad that these are not Palms, they would not grow so well if they were. To see a picture of *Pachypodium lamerei* check out: <http://cissus.mobot.org/MOBOT/photoessay/spiny.html> . There are some photos there.

I hope that I answered some of your questions, I know those latinized biological names are a PAIN, but those of us that use them realize their is a value. I believe that in this 'internet age' that value will be greater when we want to get information off of the web. Good Luck to you and thanks for the question.

Regards, CSSA web page information contact.



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ETHEL BARON



CHARLES M. DAVIS



RON FRITZ



LOIS NAVARRO



MARTY ZIRKEL

Please check the front label of your newsletter for
a message or the expiration date. If the date is
1999/11 this is your last issue.

Please renew early to avoid the 2000 rush, it will
be appreciated!

Making Weird Pots for Weird Plants

by Jeff Wright

I was asked to do a succulent of the month article on *Aloinopsis*, since I like small succulents, and since nobody had recently, if ever, done a report on them. Soon after that, I went out and bought myself 6 or 8 different *Aloinopsis* so I could familiarize myself with them. As it sometimes happens, when you try out new types of plants, half of them died within a couple of months. I'm still not sure why they died. It might possibly have been too much water. Some plants, like Lithops, don't like water in the winter and tend to rot if they stay out in the rain. Just the same, some plants don't like water in the summer. I'm still learning all this though, mostly through trial and error.



After I had such bad luck with *Aloinopsis*, I decided to change my report to "My Favorite Mesemb." Lithops are, of course, a Mesemb (Mesemb is short for Mesembryanthemaceae, which is too long of a word in my opinion). Well, after a couple of months of thinking about this as a report, I decided I did not like Mesembs enough to write a report about them. I change my mind a lot huh? Don't get me wrong, Mesembs are really neat. It's just that the only Mesembs I'm really all that familiar with are Lithops, not enough for an entire report.

One thing I do have a lot of interest in is making my own ceramic pots. Most people in the society know that Michael and Joyce

Buckner make their own pots - and they are really neat pots. When I first joined the society, about a year and a half ago, two things seemed to catch my attention. One was Rudy Lime's awesome Bonsai, and the other Michael and Joyce's Tex pots (at first I thought Tex was Michael's brother and they were selling the pots for him, but I soon learned that Tex is their cat). Well, I've tried creating

Bonsai in the past and it didn't turn out to be my thing. But I have never created my own pots before.

Within a few months of joining the society, I got to be good friends with the Buckners. While visiting the them in late 1998, we decided to work with some clay. I just started smashing the clay into weird shapes that were actually meant to be pots for strange and unusual cactus and other succulents. To people in the society, these plants may not seem that strange and unusual, but friends of mine who are not familiar with these plants think some of them are from Mars or Venus. After the Buckners saw

that I actually had some sort of artistic talent, or at least some sort of mental illness, they gave me some clay to take home and work. A few months later I was buying my own clay and firing my own creations in a friend's kiln. I decided I would write about how I like to create my pots, find a plant to go with it, and sometimes add a rock or a stick to finish it all up, like icing on





a cake. So, I guess my report is now called "My Crazy Hobby" or "Weird Pots for Weird Plants" or something.

I usually like to work with clay at night. I've found that the

best way for me to create is to not plan it out, but to just do it. I grab that chunk of clay and just start to form it into something weird and wonderful. I like my pots to have parts that stick out like a broken branch of a tree. I'll bring lots of my pots to the meeting so you all can see what I mean. I usually spend just 5 or 10 minutes on one and create 6 to 12 pots in one sitting. I've found that it's good to let them sit under plastic for awhile to dry partially before you texturize them, that way they are easier to work with.

To give the surface texture I use my carving tools (a toothpick or a paperclip will also work) and carve little designs in the pots. I also use a dull knife to pound in texture. You just take the knife, choose a region on the pot, and start pounding, thereby creating a wood bark-like texture. Imprints create another surface affect. I take shells or rings and press in a shape. Any shape will do there are hundreds of things you could use as imprints. I've heard of people using leaves but I haven't tried that yet.

After you do all the "surface work" on the pot, poke a hole in the bottom, sign your pot (I sign my pots "Little Ratty" which is the name of one of my six pet rats, but that's a whole different story) and let it dry for a few days. Now it's ready for staining. I use Iron Oxide (rust). You buy it as a powder (at Free Form Clay Co.) and mix it with water. Use gloves and a mask and work in a well-ventilated area. This rust stuff is bad for your skin and you should not breathe the dust, that's bad too, so be careful. I use a sponge to dab it on the pot, let it dry for a few minutes, then use a dry or lightly moist rag to wipe off the excess. Wiping it off tends to leave deposits in the crevasses, which gives a real neat 3D effect.

Some people like to do what they call bisque firing, which as far as I know is a lower temperature firing. They do the bisque firing to make the pot solid so that when you are staining the pots you do not have to be so careful about ruining the surface by using too much water. After the bisque firing and the staining, they fire the pots again at high temperatures, which I understand to be over 2000 degrees Fahrenheit. I have had problems when staining, the surface of the pot gets messed up because it was too moist when I wiped off the excess stain. Bisque firing first will solve this problem, since after bisque firing the pot is partially hardened. I prefer not to bisque fire simply because you have to fire twice which takes more time. Firing takes several days: it takes some time for the kiln to heat up to maximum temperature (possibly a day but I'm not really sure) and some time for it to cool down again. It also takes time to load and unload the kiln. So I decided to do one firing, and to be careful when staining just because of the time saved.

When you go to pick up your pots from the kiln, it's like Christmas! Now you have all sorts of pots to put out on your bench and do some potting. What I like to do is choose a plant (I have hundreds of cactus and other succulents that are ready to be potted up into nice ceramic pots), choose a pot that goes nicely with the plant, then pot it up. I then put on some sort of pleasant top dressing. I periodically go to the pet store and buy nice gravel that is supposed to be used in fish tanks. Also, whenever I go hiking, if I see some nice gravel I collect a sample. I have at least a dozen different types of gravel and sand that I have to use as top dressing.

To put the final touches on the creation, I find a nice rock, or maybe a little stick or whatever seems to work; to place next to the plant in the pot. And of course whenever I'm out hiking, or just outside, I take home



continued on page 14



Close-up of an incredible *Ariocarpus fissuratus* crest in habitat

ARIOCARPUS

by Wendell S. Minnich

This information sheet will not be from the books. As you know, we can all get any information regarding this genus that we want by just picking up almost any cactus text. The idea for this brief synopsis is for me to share with you my personal experiences in the field, in cultivation and from shows, as it relates to this incredible genus.

There is probably no more valuable and sought after group of cacti in the world than that of the genus *Ariocarpus*. These plants are often thought to be difficult to grow, slow of growth and expensive to buy. In general these three statements are considered to be true, but there are exceptions and special considerations that should be known.

In recent years the entire genus has been placed on the endangered species list. This single factor has thus created a supply and demand situation therefore driving up the prices of large mature or clustered specimens. Some of the older plants, brought into the

country prior to these rulings, have demanded prices in the thousands of dollars. Since these specimen plants will probably never again be offered from field populations, it is conceivable that all of these old field plants will just keep getting more valuable. I remember an old time member of our San Gabriel club, Chet Emory, once telling me that the best investment that I could make was to buy specimen *Encephalartos* (Cycads) because they would just keep getting more and more valuable. He was right, and the same has become true with the genus *Ariocarpus*. So get the big ones when you can!

The flip side to this story is that many of us growers have learned and perfected our methods of growing this genus. As you know, all *Ariocarpus* flower in our fall (Sept.-Nov.), thus coming at a time when not too many other genera choose to flower, only allowing for us to give them more attention. Most of their flowers are relatively large (1" to 3" in diameter.) and are usually white, pink, or

yellow in color. Pollination is very easy by following the standard procedure of transferring the yellow pollen to the extruded, often large, stigma lobes. All species are self-sterile, thus requiring the pollen to be from another plant. Hybrids are easy to create but please keep careful records. The seeds are also generally large and easy to deal with. The fruit is usually produced in from late spring on into summer and is not very showy. It's often whitish or of a pink cast, and is produced around the apex of the plant from the previous years flowering. Harvesting the seeds from the crown of these plants can sometimes be problematical. Frequently, the seed capsule will brake off thus leaving some of the seed in their wooly tops. From my experience, seeds do not have to be fresh, but both old and new seeds will germinate well especially during the mid-summer months. Seedlings need to be kept slightly moist during their first year until they have developed a sufficient root system. In the years to follow, they can grow fairly fast and attain a flowering size in as little as three to four years depending on the species. I have found that all *Ariocarpus* love very hot temperatures (110-120 degree F) when growing, which is from about May through September. They also like to be well watered and fertilized during this period and they will grow to remarkable size in a relatively short time.

During the winter months it is best to keep them basically dry, warm and well lighted. Most *Ariocarpus* generally get strong solar intensity, year round, and they don't mind humidity during their growing season. I have seen *A. kotschoubeyanus* covered with an inch or two of water for almost a month in the Laguna Viesca and El Pilar regions of Northern Mexico.

All *Ariocarpus* come from Mexico and the United States. The sole species from the U.S. is *A. fissuratus*, which is found in the Big Bend region and further south down into Northern Mexico in the state of Chihuahua. *A. fissuratus* v. *lloydii* is its next closest relative and differs in that it grows much larger up out of the



Ariocarpus fissuratus v. *lloydii*

ground and has less fissured, rounded or smoother tubercles. Flowers for both these taxa are large and generally magenta in color. A close relationship geographically and in form is *A. kotschoubeyanus* and its varieties *albiflora*, and *elephantidens*. This species has the most widespread distribution of the entire genus growing in silty mud flats from Coahuila in Northern Mexico all the way down to the shale hillsides in the state of Hidalgo. Its body size (1"-3" inches in diameter) and flowers are smaller (1"+) and range in color from magenta to white. The locals in some parts of Mexico call these plants the *Pezuna de Venados*, the "foot of the deer." Two fairly new additions to the genus are *A. hintonii* and *A. bravoanus*, both rather small plants with similar looks to that of *A. fissuratus* and *A. agavoides*. These two species also have average size magenta flowers and are found in the states of Nuevo Leon and San Luis Potosi growing in rocky scrub covered hillsides. The smallest of the genus is *A. agavoides*, which comes from near Tula in the state of S.L.P. and also grows similarly on rubble river rock hill tops. This plant is often not visible for many months to years because the goats love to eat the tops off of these plants during periods of drought. Probably the most variable of the genus is the *A. retusus* group. This includes triangular,

continued on page 14

SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is a nonprofit, hobby organization (affiliated with the CSSA) created to stimulate interest in succulent plants. This society brings together people with a common interest for the purpose of educating the public about the beauty and uniqueness of these remarkable plants, encouraging proper collecting and maintenance of the plants through preservation of native habitats and horticultural propagation, and to foster good fellowship. You are invited to join our society, whether you are an expert, amateur, or a beginner with an interest in unusual plants and flowers.

You will receive our publication *Espinas y Flores*, one of the best cacti and succulent newsletters. We produce 11 issues a year. You will get great articles and keep up with club news for the next year.

Our meetings are on the second Saturday of the month (except June and September) and newsletters are received the week of the meeting. We offer knowledgeable speakers who present educational & entertaining programs; many are world renowned scholars, botanists, explorers and authors. The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society's Annual Show and Plant Sale occurs the first weekend of June in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego. A wide range of succulent plants, ceramic pots, and growing supplies are available during most meetings. There is also a plant exchange table and a library. For more information regarding membership, please call Joey Betzler, Membership Chair, at (619) 569-8510 or send e-mail to jabetzler@aol.com.

Yes, I/We wish JOIN or REJOIN the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society.

NAME(S): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, COUNTRY & ZIP+4: _____

PHONE/FAX/E-MAIL: _____

Do you know that for an additional \$5.00 paid on your membership dues - you can have *Espinas y Flores* delivered by first class mail, instead of bulk mail? Check here and add \$5.00 to your dues payment, if you are far away you will receive our newsletter faster.

Dues are \$10.00 per person, \$5.00 for each additional person in the same household for (bulk rate USA), add \$5.00 for First Class Delivery (optional). International dues, including Mexico and Canada, are \$25.00 (US funds), additional members as above.

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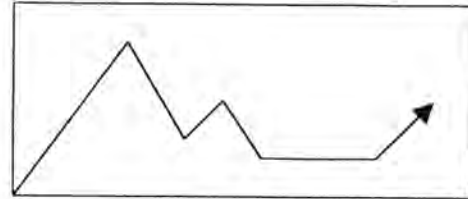
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WHAT'S THE STATUS?

by Tom Knapik



Growing cacti and other succulents in our back yards is fun and interesting but nothing compares to seeing these unusual plants in habitat. The sights, sounds, and smells stimulate our senses beyond description and can only be experienced. One of the best places nearby to visit this wondrous environment is Anza-Borrego Park.

Our club has supported the Park in the past when they acquired Sentenac Canyon. Now they have something new to offer. An easy desert walk has just opened and it has been designed for all ages and hiking abilities. Nana, a desert-dwelling grandmother describes the walk below.

There is a new desert trail, completed this summer, which offers gorgeous views of the desert in all directions and, best of all, can be used by everyone, regardless of age, physical condition or other disability. This is an ideal trail for visitors who happen to find themselves in the desert unprepared to hike other trails. This is one of the few desert walks that can be traveled in any kind of foot wear, including sandals, beach shoes or medium high heels.

Built by the Park and partially funded by ABDNHA, this hard-surface trail blends into the desert terrain perfectly. It is wide enough for wheelchairs or for several people to walk abreast. It is a fine trail for seniors, toddlers or for parents with children in strollers. It offers the casual desert observer fine vistas in all directions. The trail is about one-quarter mile in length. Any amount of time can be spent on this trail, but I spent about a half-hour looking, listening and observing the surroundings; this time, in a wheelchair, due to a Nana mistake this summer! This multi-purpose trail is located at the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Visitor Center.

Most of the trail is a gentle downhill grade if you start from the trailhead marked Camp, ground Trail near the Visitor Center parking lot. This downhill aspect would probably not be noticeable if you were walking, but as a wheelchair novice I quickly observed this fact! If you start the trail at the Visitor Center entrance, the opposite would be true.

Shortly after you begin the trail, look to the west and notice six ironwood trees. During drought the other vegetation here is brown, but in wet years you will notice the plentiful burro-bush, cholla, creosote and indigo in this region. Travel on to the place where the campground trail leads to the north and notice the wide viewing and resting place. Notice the view to the west of the San Ysidros. From here you can see the campground, the stand of palms at the old Hoberg resort (now the Palms at Indian Head), the citrus groves leading into Coyote Canyon and the Santa Rosa Mountains to the northeast. Look to the east and Font's Point and the straight segment of Palm Canyon Drive, which passes the airport (see the landing and taxi strips).

Continue on the trail to the second wide spot (pullout). Look to the northwest and see a stunning view of Indian Head. Proceed to the third pullout. From here you get a glimpse of the Visitor Center and the *Washingtonia filifera* palms which grow alongside the pupfish pond. From the fourth pullout, a view of the Visitor Center's main entrance can be seen; the fifth offers a view of the "bridge," the observation deck above the main entrance, which is also wheelchair accessible.

The sixth stop was my favorite. From here you will view the park headquarters to the south. Just past this stop, notice the big desert willow tree. As you proceed, you will notice the Edith M. Nierenberg Plaza and the many plants in this area: elephant tree, indigo, cheese-weed, brittle bush, fairy duster,



desert lavender, ocotillo and, next to the Plaza bricks, small agave and yucca. Notice the large palo verde tree on the other side of the Plaza. Along this portion of the trail I also noticed coyote scat, filled with seeds, plus beavertail, barrel, pencil cholla and hedgehog cacti. Near the end of the trail was the pupfish pond and a very large catclaw tree, AKA Gotcha! From here, we entered the Visitor Center.

For More information on Anza-Borrego contact them at ABDNHA P.O. Box 310, 2345 Stirrup Road, Borrego Springs, CA 92004-0310 * PHONE (760) 767-3052 * FAX (760) 767-3099 E-MAIL: ABDNHA@uia.net * WEB SITE: <http://www.california-desert.org> . The official newsletter of the Anza-Borrego Desert Natural History Association (ABDNHA), The Sand Paper, appears monthly, October through May.

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any little rocks I find that look neat. You never know when you'll need a little rock to put the finishing touches on a potted plant creation.

I have found that I mostly like plants that are either very small miniatures, or medium sized plants that are either crested or monstrose, or have a nice bulbous root or caudex. Of course I'll bring examples of all my favorites to the meeting in November. I like the plants for the way they look, not how rare or hard to grow they are. Because I like them strictly for how they look, I always (and this is a very bad habit) throw out the label because I do not currently (but I may change in the future) care what the names are. What's in a name? Therefore I do not know the names of most of my plants. All I know is that I like them and they are cool.

Some plants I do know the names of and look great in my pots are:

- *Euphorbia obesa* - looks like a rock (or a golf ball). Some people think it to be from Mars.
- *Crassula pyramidalis* - looks like a little tree trunk with no leaves - very good for miniatures.
- *Mammillaria* 'Fred' - I don't know the species on this one but it is very ugly and neat looking.
- *Lithops* sp. - I can't tell the different species apart but they are the original "rock plant"
- *Aloinopsis* sp. - I have a few that I have not killed yet but I don't know the species names.
- *Dudleya greenii* 'white sprite' - a miniature *Dudleya* that I really like just because!
- *Haworthia* sp. - there are lots of cool *Haworthias* - they look like little *Aloes* kind of!
- *Fockea edulis* - has a huge caudex and grows like a vine.

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weird shaped tubercles. The species comes from Coahuila and occurs south into S.L.P. and carries such geographic names as sp. from Aramberri and Sp. from Mina San Rafael with many, many unusual forms within each of the populations. *A. scapharostrus* is a very desired smaller species from near Reyones where it only grows on vertical shale covered hills. Its boat shaped tubercles gives it an interesting quality all its own, and the flowers are also magenta and about 1 " to 2" in diameter. The last and the only species with yellow flowers is *A. trigonus*, and it comes from Juamave, to over the mountains near the eastern coast near Ciudad Victoria. This plant gets fairly large 8" to 10" across with deep green to gray green colored tubercles. An extremely long tubercled variety is also encountered called *A. trigonus* v. *elongatus*.

Cultivation of this genus is actually fairly easy. The entire group requires strong light, a rich mix with good drainage and lots of heat in the summer months. Watering should be done from about May through September with light feedings each watering. During the winter months watering should be done sparingly with no feeding. I feel that each plant should be repotted at least once every three years. *Ariocarpus* like the heat, they love light (90%), mucho water in the summer and good ventilation. Learn your plants, don't be afraid to water and you'll love this genus. A bonus, no spines to poke you and they make stunning show plants when potted up in beautiful Wujcik, Van Auker, Alford, Gerlach or bonsai pots. Given careful care and time, one can amass a wonderful collection of this, "my favorite cactus genus", and maybe in time, yours too.

Palomar Plant Show

The Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society

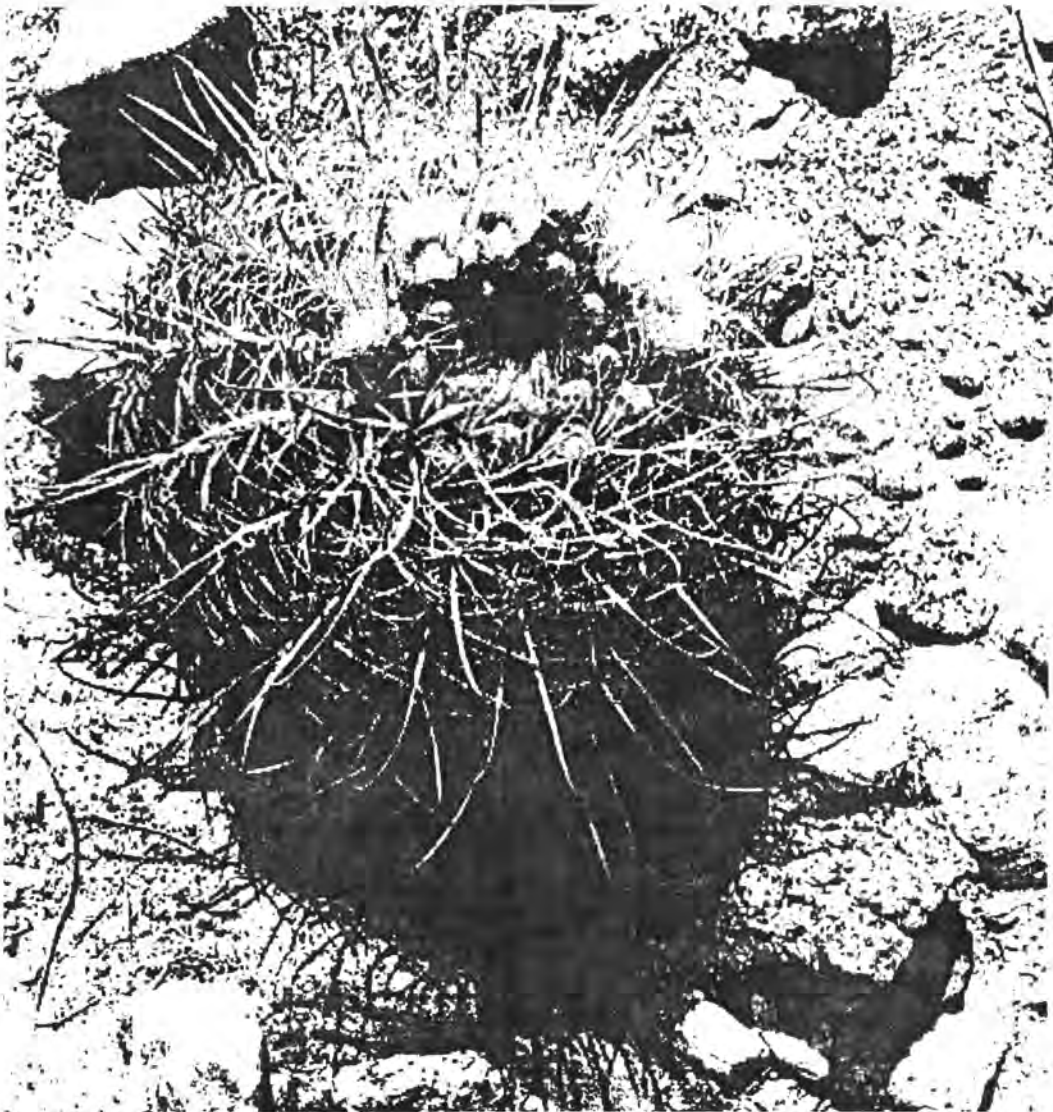
is Proud to Announce the
Fall Show on November 27, 1999.

This Event will be held in the usual meeting Place:
the Joslyn Senior Center at 725 North Broadway in Escondido.

All fellow hobbyists are welcome to show plants

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE THERE BY 10:30 AM, SETUP ENDS AT 11:45 AM

If you plan to show plants call Stan at 760-743-1560 for details.



Something for everyone; novice, expert, and peoples choice categories.

Emphasis on interesting plants, not on occasional blemishes.

Easy viewing, unusual and traditional awards.

Extra points for cacti!

See You There...

Issue Highlights

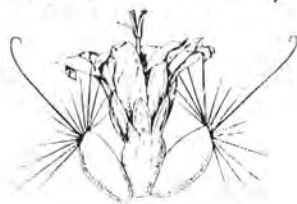
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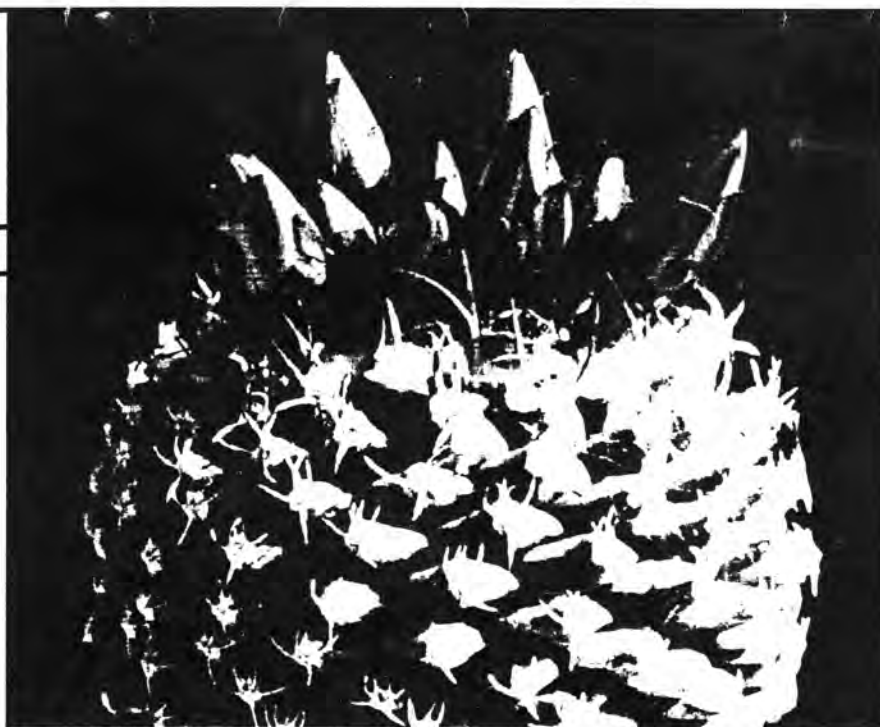
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Name this succulent! Hint the flowers are magenta. Name to genus only, write down your guess and place it in the drawing container at our next meeting.

The SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY, INC. is open to all persons interested in growing cacti and other succulent plants. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month (except June, Sept. and Dec.) at 1:00 PM in room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Executive Board meetings are open to all members; call any officer or director for the time and location. Annual dues are \$10.00 per single member per year, \$5.00 for each additional member within the same household. Single copies of *Espinas y Flores* are \$1.00 per copy sent within the USA; foreign subscriptions are \$25.00. Affiliated with the CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC. SDCSS Web Page available soon please stay tuned for address.