

Espinas y Flores

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

Volume XVIII, NUMBER 10

October 8, 1983

OCTOBER MEETING

Saturday October 8, 1983

1:30 P.M.

Casa Del Prado, Room 101, Balboa Park

PROGRAM

FRANK HORWOOD

The Succulents of Somalia

Frank Horwood has taken several collecting expeditions to Africa. In 1976 he wrote a 4 part article for the C & S Journal on the Succulents of Somalia. Mr. Horwood is from England, but now lives in Santa Barbara and works at the Abbey Gardens. His talks are interesting, informative and sometimes amusing.

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Remember to start looking for or preparing a plant for the special plant exchange at the December meeting.

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NEWS news NEWS

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The winners of the Brag Table for September:

| | | |
|-----------|--------------|-------------------------|
| 1st Place | Lee Phelps | Cotyledon Schaeferianus |
| 2nd Place | Lee Phelps | Adromiscus Marinae |
| 3rd Place | Dorothy Dunn | Mammilaria Boscasana |

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Please Note:

There are two members who gave their money to Joan Johnson for their name tags last month. Would they please contact Perlso Lewis at the registration table when you come in. We need to get your names again.

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Thos who have signed up to bring refreshments for October are:

Evelyn Chatham Yoriko Rillo Cathy and Sandy Frost Anna Cornett
Nancy Roth Susan Barker Beverly Kirkegaard Thanks

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From Augie Pfeiffer

For sale. Due to lack of space, I have Cactus, Succulents and books for sale. 619 280-4444 Augie Pfeiffer, 5163 E. Bedford Dr. San Diego

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SHOW SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

Oct. 15 & 16 Ikenobo Chapter of San Diego Show Sat:11am-4:30pm Sun:11am -4:30pm
Oct. 23 Convair Garden Club Fall Show Sun: 1pm - 4:30 pm
Nov. 5 & 6 San Diego Tropical Fish Aquarium Sat: 12pm-7pm Sun: 9:00am - 4pm
Show

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DEADLINE FOR THE NOVEMBER MEETING - OCTOBER 30 - Please be prompt -- Mary

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SUCCULENT-OF-THE-MONTH

Faucaria

by Rick Latimer

The Iceplant or Fig Marigold family (Mesembryanthemaceae) has species that range from the very easy to grow to the nearly impossible (comparable to the Cactus family, I guess). Of the "Big Four" succulent families, this one's natural habitat is surely the most restricted. The dry, fairly frost-free region of southern Africa may be regarded as their home. Only a few herbaceous species extend as far as northern Africa, the coastal lands of the Mediterranean Sea, the Near East, and certain Atlantic islands. Only very few species are found growing naturally as far away as Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Peru, and even California! (Mesembryanthemum crystallinum is native to the Pacific coast from Cabo San Lucas up through most of the continental U. S., a small area on the southeastern coast of Australia, coasts of the Gulf of Persia, Red Sea, and much of the Mediterranean, some of the Atlantic Islands, and of course, the southern tip of Africa. It is one of the few annuals in this family and is one of the species in the family having "ice crystals" (water storage cells on the exterior of the leaves and stems, of course not frozen water at all) that glisten in the sun.) However, most species and genera are native only to the tip of southern Africa, and many of these inhabit extraordinarily small areas. The vast majority of the Mesembs are leaf succulents, although a few are stem succulents. The water storage content in the leaves can be as much as 95% of the volume in some species. The Mesembs are all "short", consisting of low ground covers to plants that are just two leaves (the "living rocks"). The flowers look like daisies, but are different in that the daisy flower is actually a flower head of a few to many flowers surrounded by pseudopetals called 'bracts'; while the Mesemb flower really is just a single flower with petals. The Mesemb family belongs to the order Centrospermae, which also includes the succulent families Didieria, Portulaca, and Cactus.

This family has 125 genera in it (Quiz question: Which family has more genera - Cactus or Mesemb?). Some have genera names that are long and forbidding such as Amoebophyllum, Psammophora, Smicrostigma, or Zeuktrophyllum. Many species are not now and may never be in cultivation. However, some are commonly grown such as the utilitarian ice plants of the genus Carpobrotus or highly prized living rocks such as found in the genus Lithops. Other plants are unusual for other reasons. The Trichodiademas have spines on the tips of their leaves (they almost look like Mammillarias!). The Rhombophyllums have odd shaped leaves that give them the name "Elks Horns". The most popularly grown, oddly shaped leaves in this family are the Faucarias with their distinctive jaw-like arrangement of succulent leaves. The leaves seem to have very sharp teeth along the margins, but they are soft and harmless. Since these "teeth" offer no protection to the plant, their purpose is unknown. Not all species are toothed. F. ryneveldiae is one such species. We could give it the common name of "Gums".

The only two species that we see around are F. tigrina (leaves green, with white dots and white "teeth" - common name "Tiger's Jaws") and F. tuberculosa (dark green leaves with marked tubercles (more on some plants than others) on the upper surface of the leaves, making them look like rough stones). Looking at black and white pictures of some of the other species makes one suspect that many of them look just alike. However, since they are rarely seen, it is hard to judge if that is really the case. Their native habitat is confined to several areas in the south-eastern central portion of Cape Province. All of the species flower in the late Summer and through the Autumn. They open in the afternoon and usually are yellow, although F. candida has white flowers and other species have other colors on the bottom side: F. crassisepala (purple), F. felina var. jamesii (pink), F. unionalensis (red). Their growing season is said to be the Summer, but they are not intolerant to water the rest of the year like some Mesembs. Propagation is from seed or cuttings. The plants do not grow too quickly and make fine pot plants.

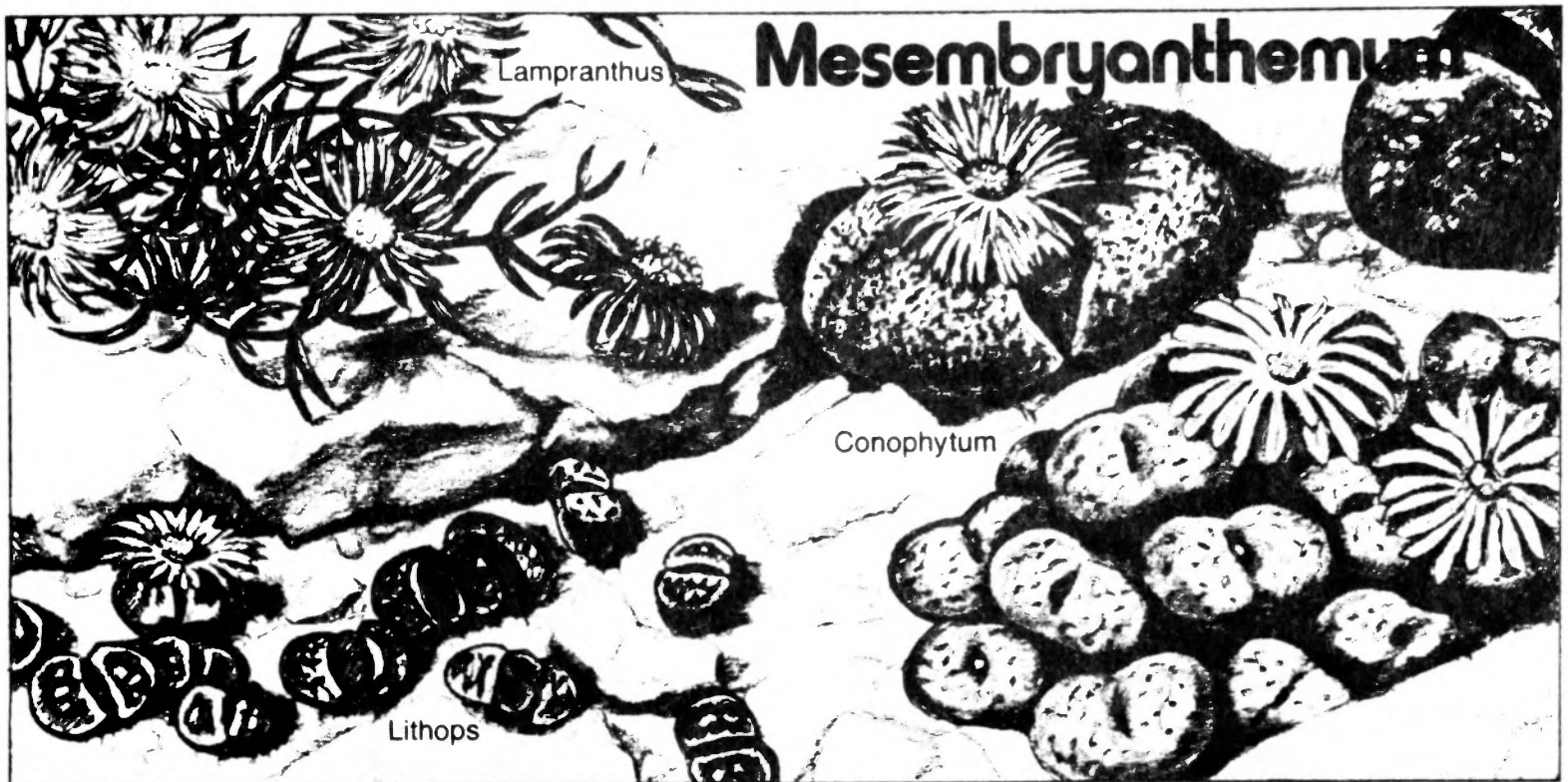
REFERENCES:

H. Herre, The Genera of the Mesembryanthemaceae.

Hermann Jacobsen, A Handbook of Succulent Plants, V. III.

G. Schwantes, Flowering Stones and Mid-Day Flowers.

Note: All three of these men have a genus of the Mesemb family named after them: Herrea, Jacobsenia, and Schwantesia.



CACTUS OF THE MONTH

Neochilenia Backeberg

by Phyllis Flechsig

Neochilenias make up a group of small barrel cacti, all native to Chile, that is generally considered to be part of the genus Neoporteria. As a group Neochilenias are distinguished from Neoporteria (in the strict sense) by their broad funnel-shaped flowers in shades of white, pink, and yellow, with wool on the flower tube, as opposed to the narrow reddish flowers (with little felt) of Neoporteria.

In the wild Neochilenias live mainly near the coast of Chile, where rainfall is very sparse but coastal fogs provide what little moisture there is. Some Neochilenias cope with the harsh climate by growing almost entirely buried in sand, with only the flowers and fruits protruding.

A variable group, these plants are in quite a mess taxonomically, with much doubt attached to pinning definite names on some of them.

Naming aside, they are very attractive plants, in or out of bloom; some, such as N. cachytaensis, N. kunzei, N. taltalensis, and N. crispa, have black bodies that contrast beautifully with the pale flowers; some, such as N. napina, are greyish, while N. paucicostata has a blue-green form. While some are spiny, others have such minute spines as to appear spineless. The flowers, which appear off and on through the warm months in this climate, have a satiny sheen that is very attractive. Fruits are hollow red berries that open at the bottom to release the seeds.

Neochilenias are generally raised from seed, as most do not offset very much. They are easy to grow, given the usual good drainage, though they may split if overwatered. They should not be watered very much in winter.

Literature consulted

- Backeberg, C. 1976. Cactus Lexicon. Blandford.
Whiteley, D. W. 1978. Echinocactus occultus Philippi.
Ashingtonia 3:63-71.
Trager, J. N. 1982. Cacti and succulents for the amateur.
Cactus and Succulent Journal (U.S.) 54:202.

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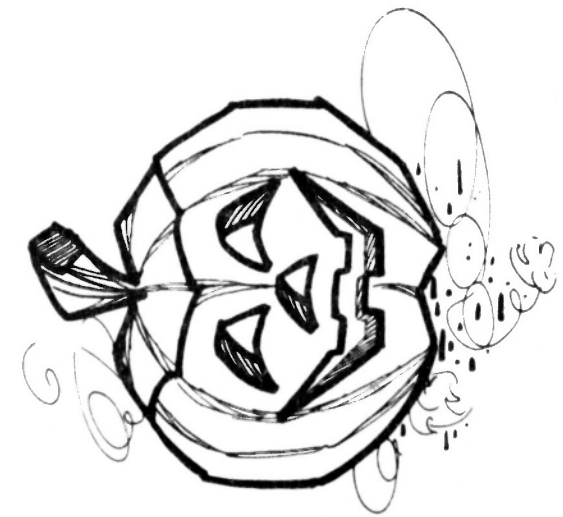
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COMMITTEES

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S.D. Botanical Garden Foundation - Elizabeth Glover
S.D. Floral Association - Verna Pasek
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Orientation:

The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is open to all persons interested in growing cacti, other succulents and exotic plants. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at 1:30 pm in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Board of Directors meetings are held after the general meetings. Annual dues are \$8.00 per single member per year, \$2.00 for each additional member of a household within a family. Single copies of Espinas y Flores are 60 cents.

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