

ESPINAS Y FLORES

MARZO 1970
PUBLICATION OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND
SUCCULENT SOCIETY

TEN LESSONS LEARNT BY A BEGINNER

LIKE MOST BEGINNERS I've made many mistakes—experience is always the best teacher—sometimes only after we lose a treasured plant, the lesson is learned. This article breaks no new ground, and only tells of the basic lessons the following plants have taught me.

1. *ASTROPHYTUM MERIOSTIGMA*. One of the first plants I bought and grew inside on a window ledge, where it became elongated and out of character. The top was cut off and grown in sun, where it grew true to form...the base with its resultant four offsets, whilst interesting, is a constant reminder that originally I had not given my plant ENOUGH LIGHT.

2. Each time I see *MAMMILLARIA ALDILANATA* with its symmetrical spine arrangement and short straight central spines, I am reminded that I almost lost this attractive plant. It had to suffer the indignity of having its top cut off also and bottom allowed to callous over because of rot. A hard lesson to learn is to WATER SPARINGLY. We hate to pass by those plants that require less frequent watering.

3. A constant rebuke to me is *BRYOPHYLLUM DIAGREMONTIANA* x *TUBIFLORA*, the easily grown, robust plant which drops its little plantlets, and which spring up where they fall. In my ignorance I have been guilty of giving them away under the name of *B. DIAGREMONTIANA*, and not until I received the true one was I aware of my mistake. But yet how many of us must be guilty of WRONG NAMING and by giving away, swapping or selling carelessly-named plants further perpetuate the confusion which exists on correct names.

4. My *ASTROPHYTUM ORNATUM* seedlings remind me that I had a more mature plant of this species. However, with the first repotting, water was given too soon

---continued---

TEN LESSONS---continued:

before the damaged roots had time to heal. A lesson learned was to exercise CARE IN REPOTTING and allow the plant to readjust from the shock of uprooting.

5. A new addition, MAMMILLARIA PLUMOSA with its beautiful white feathery spines I noticed becoming marked at the base. Although potted in well-drained soil, it needed an extra layer of fine gravel as protection for its softer body. Marsden "Mammillarias" suggests chicken grit as this plant has a tendency to pull itself down into the soil, and this taught me plants must be TREATED AS INDIVIDUALS.

6. Another from my first batch of plants---MAMMILLARIA ELONGATA, did not grow and remained dormant, whilst others thrived. The soil mixture has set hard, and upon examination proved to be of poor quality, and the roots were almost non-existent. Given good porous soil mixture, it immediately burst into growth again, showing the importance of POROUS SOIL and free air movement to the roots.

7. The common SENECIO ARTICULATA (Candle plant) was first to make me aware that certain plants had growing periods at different times of the year. Having learned the basic lesson of watering in summer and keeping dry in winter, I found this plant finished up rotting with this treatment. Now important to learn the RESTING PERIODS of our plants.

8. Also scattered amongst my collection are a few plants to which I can give no name, lost or forgotten names, faded, unreadable tags, all have taught me to exercise care in the important matter of PERMANENT RECORDS of plant names, etc.

9. Mealy bugs, ants, snails, frost, century heat and leaky roof are all potential hazards, but if you give a few minutes a day to your plants, and are WATCHFUL, many of these problems can be avoided. The lesson is to try and be one jump ahead!!

10. My four-year-old daughter once watered my plants in the middle of winter. She was enthusiastically "helping her Dad". She was doing the wrong thing (but so happy) and many of us as beginners lost plants by ignorance in exactly the same way, but if we learn by our mistakes and profit by them, and keep our ENTHUSIASM I believe we'll gain by experience the skill required to grow many of the rarer and more exotic plants.

---NOEL MAIN, Yarrowonga, Victoria

ESPINAS Y FLORES is very pleased to present Noel Main's article "TEN LESSONS LEARNT BY A BEGINNER". Mrs. I. Little, Editor, Cactus & Succulent Society of New South Wales writes:

"Noel lives in a small town on the border of the two states of New South Wales and Victoria. Because of his common-sense approach and great enthusiasm he has gathered a group of interested followers. In our Society we get new members constantly and we feel we must provide material for them as well as for the more experienced members. He accomplishes his goals by writing as a "beginner for beginners".

PHOENIX via GRINGO PASS: Scotty and Hazel took a lengthy detour enroute to Papago via Organpipe Nat. Monument, Hugo Johnson's in Tucson and Saguaro Nat. Monument but were never able to catch up with Dr. and Mrs. PHELPS. An overnight stop near Papago allowed for an early Monday morning visit with W. Hubert Earle and an un-scheduled tour of the exhibits plus a look at the developing library which appears to be well on the way to becoming a new "monument" in Arizona... and well it should.

---by Anony MOUS

MARZO 1970 MEETING

SATURDAY, MARZO 7, 1970, 1:30 PM
IN THE FLORAL ASSOCIATION BUILDING
IN BALBOA PARK, SAN DIEGO

P-R-O-G-R-A-M

Bob Taylor of El Cajon will
present a program of "CACTI
AND SUCCULENTS OF MEXICO"

---VISITORS ARE WELCOME!---

EXCHANGE, BRAG TABLE, REFRESHMENTS

CACTUS CAR-A-VAN

WHEN: SUNDAY, MARCH 8th, 1970

WHERE: WE WILL MEET at the San Bernardino County Museum in Bloomington at 10 o'clock. HOW to get to the Museum:

NORTH on 395 to HIGHWAY 60.

WEST on 60 to Market Street off ramp and almost immediately you'll come onto CRESTMORE ROAD.

WEST on CRESTMORE ROAD to RUBIDOUX BLVD. NORTH on RUBIDOUX BLVD. to ORANGE. EAST on ORANGE to the Museum Area. Meeting place is in the Auditorium. Lots of parking.

DOUBLE FEATURE: 1) GARDEN VISIT starting at the Museum at 10 A.M. with a guide to Dr. Edmund C. Jaeger's "DON'T BOTHER THE GARDEN". And one other garden, after which we will return to the Museum for: THE SACK LUNCH YOU BROUGHT ALONG!

2) "THE DESERTS OF THE WORLD" by Dr. Jaeger. Note: You should have Dr. Jaeger's "DESERT WILD FLOWERS", 322 pages with photos and line drawings from living material, 764 described plants in language you'll readily understand. Dr. Jaeger's "garden" is described in the February 1961 issue of Desert Magazine. (Will someone make it a point to bring that issue to our Marzo meeting. Thanks)

WHY NOT A BUS? Arrangements for a bus can't be done on such short notice. The Quarterly meeting was moved up from March 15th to avoid conflict with another important meeting in the Los Angeles area.

A "SIGN-UP" sheet will be passed at the March meeting on the 7th for the benefit of those Club members who need transportation and those who have extra space on the trip. After the meeting we shall endeavor to return to Sir George's in Escondido for a "regaloment".

ANOTHER EVENTFUL CAR-A-VAN is developing for MAY. All about that later. Set aside May 19th and 20th on your calendar. AND STILL ANOTHER CAR-A-VAN, a short one on APRIL 11th, but good.

The Old Wagonmaster---

ROLL CALL

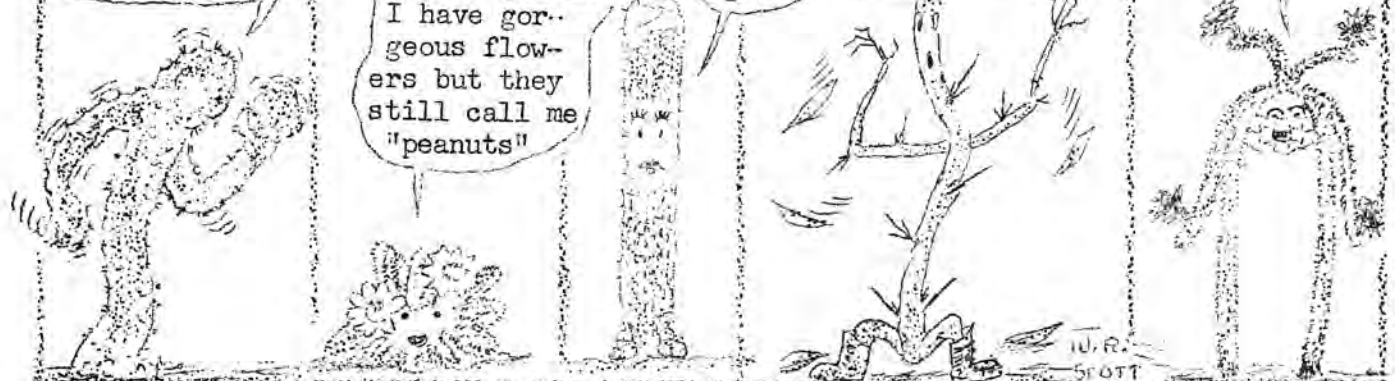
I'm the Mexican Boxing Glove Cactus, OPUNTIA MAMILLATA, er---OPUNTIA "MUHAMMED ALI" if you please, alias FULGIDA for my radiant disposition. Would you like to swing a few rounds? I'll lay you out in the first.

With MUHAMMED swinging like wild I'll have to lay low so I don't get my flowers knocked off. I'm CHAMAECEREUS SILVESTRII from Argentina. I have gorgeous flowers but they still call me "peanuts"

White haired and columnar, I'm "one of, if not THE most beautiful cactus"..I quote an authority on Peruvian cacti. You agree?

MY LEAVES I DROP MY SPINES I KEEP When winter comes. A-LAS, A-LACK THEY ALL GROW BACK! When spring returns. Says I PERESKIA BLEO from Panama. Winter and spring in Panama??

I dangle and I'm docile--- I'm APORO- CACTUS FLAG- ELLIFORMIS from Mexico. "Flagellum" (bot.) suggests a whip lash-like branch. I grow beautiful crimson flowers on my "whiplashes".



OPUNTIA MAMILLATA

CHAMAECEREUS SILVESTRII

ESPOSTOA LANATA

PERESKIA BLEO

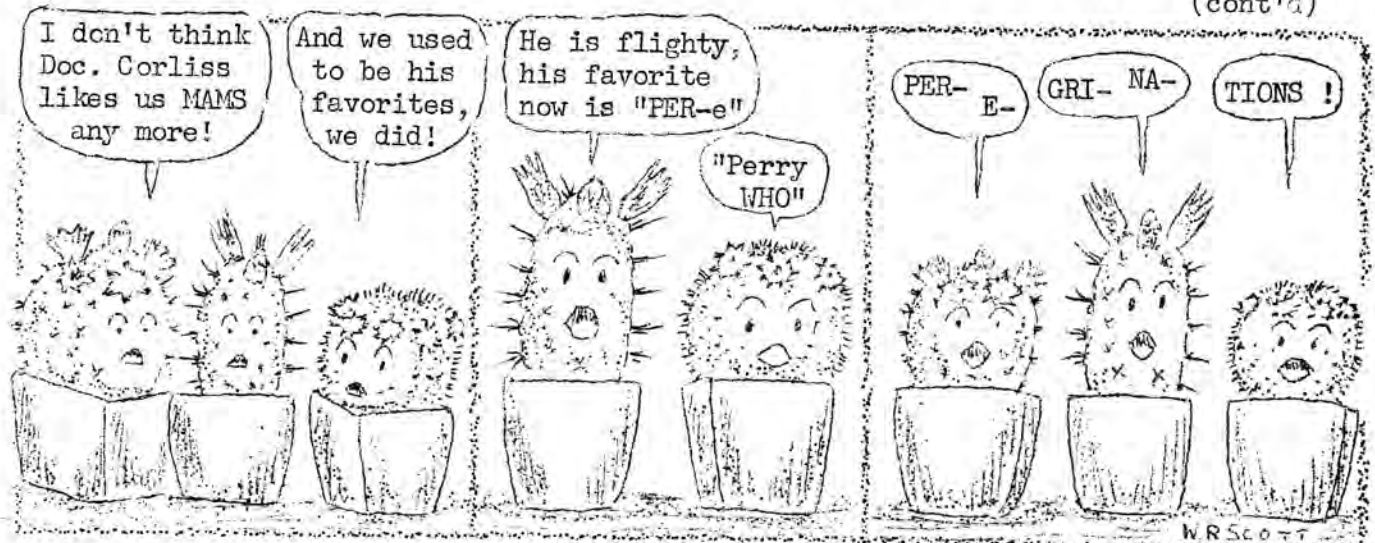
APOROCACTUS FLAGELLIFORMIS



NEVER HAVE WE witnessed such a beautiful February, temperatures warm and summer-like, flowers abounding from behind every rock, swollen buds bursting from almost every tree....and just when it looked as though our prediction for a rainy month was to go the way of poorly timed phrases....somebody pulled the chain and instantly we had a year's supply. It would be great if we could schedule this necessary inconvenience to occur at hours and on dates of our choosing. Maybe our legislative bodies can do something in this field. Think of it, when your garden needs an hour or two of water, simply call up the weather bureau and have the man send over a cloud. A nominal fee could be put on the tax bill, no blue chip stamps should be given because we want to keep the overhead low. Did you get that?

Speaking of timing, fourteen of our loyal stalwarts struck out on a weekend trip to Phoenix for the Cactus Show at Papago Park on February 22-28 with the weather threatening all over, with high winds, snow and rain. Scotty made arrangements to have the finest weather imaginable for the participants. The first section of the group met in El Cajon just before dawn on the 21st, then without hesitation landed in time for breakfast at the hospitable Rancho del Arroz of Julianne Rice....with nothing but pure native instincts to guide them the three-car caravan put forth upon the tranquil sea of sand. They paused briefly several times to explore arroyos and dry washes for driftwood, interesting rocks, plant life and to dig out Warren Duckner's Ford that was buried to the hubs in wild flowers....onward north by northeast along the Colorado River that cuts through the flat ferruginous landscape like a crystalline cutlas, through the uncharted wastes of the Arizona desert. As night shades began to fall with exhaustion as their co-pilot the twinkling lights of Wickenburg in the distant darkness must have been a welcome sight. But, alas, there was nary a vacant stall for the camels and the caravan was forced to return to the metropolis of Aquila some twenty-five miles back down a road that was rapidly becoming elusive in the light of a waning moon. However, lodging was secured and much to the astonishment of all, noone had to share with the stable animals. The hour was late and securing food would prove to be a more difficult chore, but thanks to an intimate knowledge of the area, Wagonmaster Jimbo was able to supply a sumptuous spread of chicken fried steak at a local truckers' retreat.

(cont'd)



WRSCOTT

CACTUS SQUEEZINS
Continued.....

The new day brought on a new outlook and the trio of autos led by

"Caballo Blanco" charged off to Phoenix where they found LEE PHELPS and family already enjoying the sun and all other things at Cactusland.

By midafternoon the crowds had swelled to a point that made it difficult to distinguish a cactus from a cactophile, so our merry band set out in search of a Mobil Station, of which in the whole city of Phoenix there is but one. After living first hand through the old story of the needle and the haystack and with only a handful of sunflower seeds to stave off the hunger pains that stretched from the toes to an area just below the heart, our group set sail for a mythical steak house that would serve up a chunk of prime flesh the likes of which would make Diamond Jim Brady have second thoughts. As in any desert there is a great distance between watering holes, and when it was impossible to go on, a hasty picnic lunch was prepared at a roadside park by the experienced hands of VIRGINIA BUCKNER. It was agreed by all that a salami sandwich was never intended to replace a rare "T" bone, but at that time they couldn't imagine anything tasting any better.

A little way down one of the many back roads around Gila Bend, Editor MIKE found some Indian pictographs on the face of a volcanic escarpment. Nearly everyone risked life and limb to view the inscribed tales of deer and wildlife as witnessed by an ancient observer.

DOUG and DONNA BUCKNER commemorated their first anniversary by having their picture taken beside a multi-branched Saguaro, and if Indian legend means anything, that should be quite an omen. Not to leave you hanging, WARREN BUCKNER did get his steak that night in Gila Bend at the new Travelodge....excellent food and rooms.

I remember when the first ones came here from Sonora, there was only four in the family.
Now try to count them!

If those CEREUS THURBERIS don't do something about population control, Pima County can't feed them all in another 10,000 years.



Which do you prefer, high nitrogen and low phosphorous or vice versa?

What's wrong with old fashioned steer?



FORMULAS:
Chemical or barnyard.

In the morning shortly after the first light, the merry band criss-crossed the back alleys of the desert stopping at every refuse pile or deposit of rusting litter in search of old bottles, aged glass and pioneer ware rendered almost "crematus" by years under a searing sun.

With imperceptible grace NIBBY would glide over the unfriendly terrain discovering paradise. When Caballo Blanco was loaded with all the Saguaro skeletons, rock and bric-a-bac it was physically capable of holding, they made a madcap dash to Granny Annies for something more than a light snack of scrambled eggs with salmon. Then on up and over the distant hills to a warm and welcomed bed.

DEAR DESERT, we left you much like we found you, but the greatest mistake made by the early North American Indian was in not having an Immigration Bureau.

----A Phid

CACTUS-OF-THE-MONTH

SCHLUMBERGERA RUSSELLIANA

The Easter Cactus is so named because it will bloom in the spring of the year near the Easter season. *SCHLUMBERGERA RUSSELLIANA* (shlum-ber'-ger-ah rus-sell-e-ah'-na) and *S. BAERTNERI* (gert'-ner-i) both have the same common name, and they are the only species in the genus. The genus was named by Lemaire in 1858 for an amateur gardener, Frederick Schlumberger who collected cacti, begonias and bromeliads. The first species was named by Gardner in 1839 for the Duke of Bedford who supported Gardner's collecting trips. The species was first classified as a *Cereus*, then *Epiphyllum*, then finally the current name was given. The second species was described by Regel in 1884 as an *Epiphyllum* and was finally given a place in the present genus by Britton and Rose in 1913. It was named for Gaertner, a plant collector.



S. RUSSELLIANA is a small plant from Eastern Brazil. The joints are rarely over an inch long and barely half as wide. They are usually oval with flat sides, but they may be three or four sided and nearly square in cross-section. The plants are usually thickly clumped and mostly upright with some drooping stems. There are usually one or two notches on each edge of the joint, possibly with one or two small bristle-like spines in the areoles at the notches. The stems blush a bright red in weak sunlight over the normal pale green. The flowers always come out the areoles at the tips of the stems, but the side areoles may give rise to new stems.

A much larger plant is *S. GAERTNERI*, also from Eastern Brazil, and looks very much like the Christmas Cactus *ZYGOCACTUS TRUNCATUS*. This cactus, like the first species, is quite upright in its growth habit, but some stems may droop. There are many bristles from the tip areoles in *S. GAERTNERI*. The joints may be over two inches long and an inch wide with several notches. The areoles at the notches usually have some white wool and several bristles. Some varieties of the cactus have large tufts of bristles up to three-fourths inch long. The joints may blush purple in a weak sun.

Both species of *SCHLUMBERGERA* bloom profusely in spring. *S. RUSSELLIANA* with pink reddish-purple flowers about one inch in diameter and *S. GAERTNERI* with scarlet flowers up to two inches wide. The flowers in both are regular and have pointed petals, giving the appearance of spokes of a wheel. Both species may have several flowers from the end joint of each branch.

These cacti like the same conditions as the Christmas Cactus; loose, rich soil (50% humus) and perfect drainage. They may be grafted onto various stocks but these plants do so well on their own roots in Southern California that they are rarely grafted here. They should have at least 25% sun, but over 50% would be excessive. The plants are frost tender, but otherwise do very well in our climate. I have never kept one in the house the year round, so I don't know if there is a chilling requirement for blooming as there is with the Christmas Cactus. Cuttings of these plants are easily rooted in sand or potting mix if the cuttings are allowed to dry for several days before planting.

As mentioned in connection with Christmas Cactus, the two genera are very similar, but the spring blooming time, regular flowers and upright growth of the Easter Cacti are enough differences, in my opinion, to maintain *SCHLUMBERGERA* and *ZYGOCACTUS* as distinct genera.

P-L-A-N-T-S O-F T-H-E M-O-N-T-H

L. N. Phelps, Ph.D.

MARZO: *SCHLUMBERGERA GAERTNERI*....*DUDLEYA ATTENUATA*.....

ABRIL: *ECHINOCEREUS CHLORANTHUS*...*HAWORTHIA CUSPIDATA*...

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH
DUDLEYA ATTENUATA

COLLECTORS, THE TIME
has come to conserve,
to band together to

beat the bulldozers. Conservationists, let's
go collecting in Tecelote Canyon!!!

An obscure item buried in the March 1st
issue of the Sunday Union read: "A land devel-
oper has won his suit against the City of San
Diego to allow him to build a subdivision in
Tecelote Canyon. The subdivision had been op-
posed on grounds the canyon should be preser-
ved as open space." And it should have been
and we all lost because we let it happen, al-
though the City tried---the terrible price of
apathy.

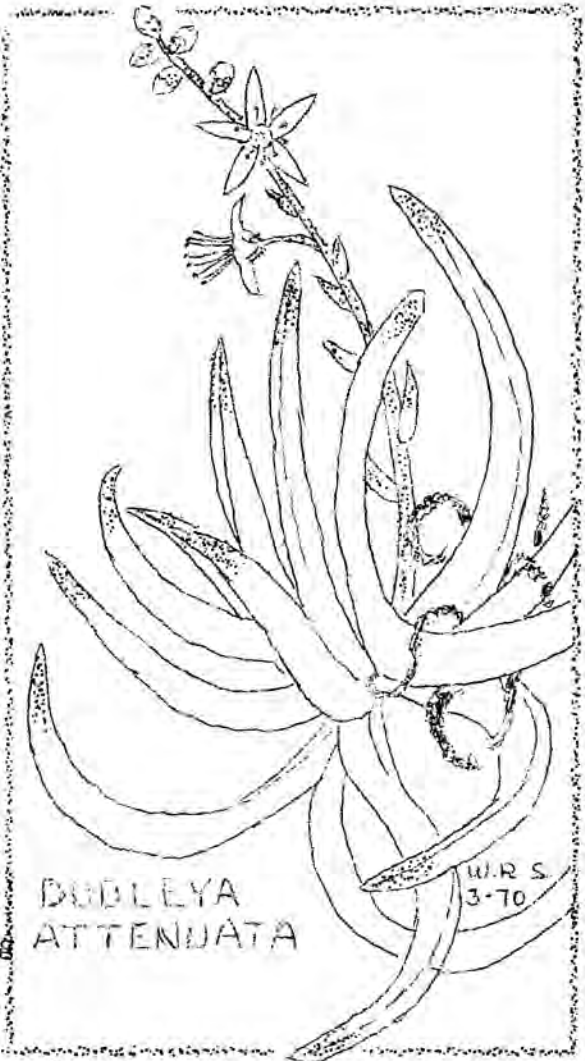
Lament is meaningless. Let us try to save
the succulents growing there now, practically
undisturbed since Balboa blew by. The law re-
quires written permission of the owner to dig
native plants. Let's get permission from the
subdivider for our Society to rescue what we
can before the terrorizing of terracing begins
on Tecelote.

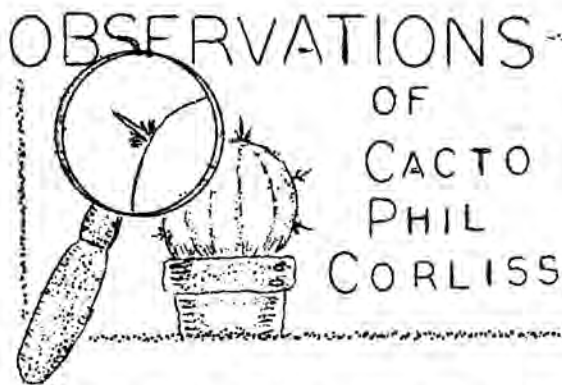
This bit of open space lies above Mission
Bay in the Clairemont bluffs. What grows
there in addition to *Dudleya attenuata*? I
recall dodging chollas as we spotted the but-
tery blooms of *Mam Dicoica*, as well as the spring
reddening spines of a small-bodied *ferocactus*
with a tendency to cluster. And what appears
to be a miniature variety of *Dudleya attenuata*
and a number of other plants to excite wildflower lovers.

Our endangered plant-of-the-month is rosette in form, growing approximately to a
foot across and 9" high. The pencil-like leaves measure 5-7", one quarter of an
inch to so in diameter and tapering to a point (hence "attenuata" which means nar-
rowing to a point). These cylindrical leaves are smooth and gray-green, contrasting
actively with other foliage in the rock garden. It increases by crown division and
can readily be separated. Take care handling, however, for the succulence of the
leaves allows such tender crispness that they break easily. Flowering in April on
straggly branching stalks, pale yellow slightly pinkish blossoms continue to look
as if they will open tomorrow until the day they do go to seed.

Named after Prof. Bill Dudley, a systematic botanist of the original faculty of
Stanford University, the *Dudleyas* are all native to California and Baja with the few
exceptions found in Arizona. The 80 species belong to the *Crassulaceae* family along
with the closely related *Echeverias*. The resemblance between these two genera is so
strong that the *Dudleyas* were formerly considered *Echeverias*. In fact, there are
intergeneric hybrids around named "*Dudloveria*"! One difference is that *Echeverias*
drop their leaves but those of the *Dudleyas* cling stubbornly long after they're dead.

April is *Dudleya* month. On the sides of Mt. Helix to the cliffs of Santa Barbara
large rosettes of *D. Pulvulenta* contrast native flora; on bluffs overlooking San
Diego and Mission Bays *D. Atenuata* with its silvery fingers clutching every ray of
sunlight; along back country roads of north county *D. Lanceolata* crowds close in
rocks of cutbacks; near Palm Springs *D. saxosa* opens fully to accept Spring under
protection of desert chaparral. But none have the outright brazen beauty of *Dudleya*
brittonii carpeting the cliff sides on the old road from Tijuana to Ensenada. It is
as if the "Great Flower Child in the Sky" were caught up in a psychedelic desire to
create a gigantic anaglyphic engraving of alabastrine rosettes.





GENUS NEOPORTERIA

The genus *neoporteria* has much to commend it to the cactus enthusiast. The plants are of relatively easy culture, whether grown from seed, reestablished from habitat, or grafted. The (mostly) funnel-form flowers are quite large, borne over a long season and have a color range of cream-yellow-pink-red-purple. The spine size, color, number and type are varied and attractive.

There is perhaps no cactus family still so actively developing, and the recent discoveries of new types and variations have produced a plethora of names and synonyms. Messrs. Donald and Rowley, the English authorities on this family, provided a yeoman service with their "Reunion of the Genus *Neoporteria*" published in the *Cactus and Succulent Journal of Great Britain* in 1966. They have reunited the *neoporteria-horridocactus-pyrrhocactus-neochilenia-chlororebutia-reicheocactus-islaya* into the genus *neoporteria* and provided a key for the genus. All recognized (published) species have been properly placed in this key and synonyms listed. It is to be devoutly hoped that dealers will use this keyed nomenclature!

Plants of the genus *neoporteria* are found in the coastal uplands and inland Andes of Chile, Argentina, and Peru, extending down on the eastern slope to a height of about one mile. The bodies have tubercles, sometimes arranged in ribs. The flowers appear from the areoles of the crown and of interest is the fact that some varieties produce two or more flowers from the same areole.

They are considered to be "dwarf" plants, but many species in age become taller than twelve inches, which is the usual horticultural limit for "dwarf" plants. I do not find these old specimens very attractive, as the flowers, so conspicuous on small young plants, seem picayune on larger ones.

They are also considered to be mainly solitary plants, although there are some exceptions. Beheading a plant will usually lead to the development of multiple heads on the body while the removed tip may be grafted. Branching is much more prone to grafted varieties and I heartily recommend grafting for much of the genus as growth and flowering are usually greatly improved.

Donald and Rowley listed 152 published varieties in their key to the genus in 1966 and it was known that Ritter and other students of the genus were prepared to publish more. I recommend the following varieties as the nucleus of a collection of this genus:

1. *NEOPORTERIA ISLAYENSIS* var. *ISLAYENSIS* forma *GRANDIFLORA*. (Synonym: *Islaya grandiflora*) The freely produced yellow flowers, definitely greenish, are followed by bright pink seed pods which look like so much spun sugar candy.
2. *NEOPORTERIA NAPINA* var. *MITIS* forma *GLABRESCENS*. (Synonym: *Chileorebutia glabrescens*) The insignificant spiny armature of this variety contrasts with the heavy spination of others in the genus and the large light pink flowers are freely produced.
3. *NEOPORTERIA VILLOSA* var. *VILLOSA*. This is a most attractive variety on account of the long soft grey spines. Pink and red flowers.
4. *NEOPORTERIA NIDUS* forma *SENILIS* (Usually sold as *neoporteria senilis*) Even more "hairy" than the preceding, the dense spines almost hide the body and under favorable conditions are quite white. Red flowers.

For variety of body, flower, and spine, varieties of *neoporteria*s, *reichi*, *subgibbosa*, *napina*, *paucicostata*, *krauzeana*, *curvispina*, *hankana*, *jussieu* and *tuberisulcata* are recommended.

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

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-----PLANTS OF THE MONTH-----APRIL 1970-----

CACTUS: Echinocereus chloranthus
SUCCULENT: Haworthia cuspidata

-----Visitors are welcome-----

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