

# 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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October 8, 1988

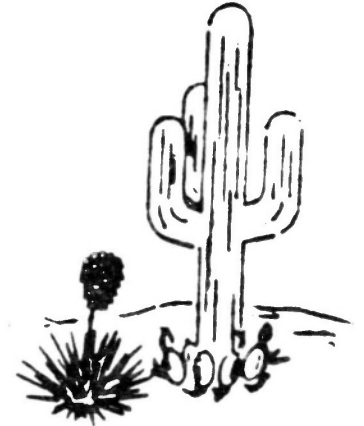


## OCTOBER MEETING

Saturday October 8, 1988

1:30 P.M.

WILD ANIMAL PARK



Cake, coffee and punch will be served. Park in the regular parking lot (\$1 charge for parking). When you enter, either show your Zoo membership card or tell them you are a member of the SDC & SS and you will be admitted without charge. Once inside, walk back to the pavillion next to the **Baja Hill**.

We have the pavillion at the Wild Animal Park from 11 am to 3 PM on the date of the meeting.

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Deadline for the next issue Espinas y Flores - OCTOBER 29, 1988 Thanks

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SEPTEMBER BRAGGING PLANT WINNERS.....



- 1st Place - Diane Crowley for her  
Caralluma rogersii
- 2nd Place - Mitch Bahr for his  
Pelargonium alternans
- 3rd Place - Jerry Brattmiller for his  
Mammillaria celsiana

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BONSAI ANYONE?

Rudy Lime has generously consented to share his time and talent again with our Club members. If you have a succulent tree-like shrub whose possibilities for beauty you have never developed, this is the time to bring it in and let Rudy show you how. He will work on your plant and/or show you how you may do some judicious pruning and wiring. You have seen his living sculptures at our plant shows and brag tables, so you know you will be helped by an expert. These bonsai training sessions will start at 12 noon in our meeting room, at the November meeting, and will continue into the next year. Please bring a plant you would like to bonsai to our November meeting!

Shirley Berry

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# Show Schedule

Oct. 1 & 2	Balboa Park African Violet Soc. Fall Show	Sat:10am-4:00pm	Sun:10am-4:00pm
Oct. 15 & 16	San Diego Co. Orchid Soc. Fall "Mini" Show	Sat:Noon-5:00pm	Sun:10am-4:30pm
Nov. 5 & 6	San Diego Tropical Fish Soc. 18th Show	Sat:Noon-6:00pm	Sun: 9am-4:30pm
Nov. 27	Sumi-e Painting & Ikebana 13th An. Show		Sun:11am-4:00pm
Dec. 2-3-4	San Diego Floral Assoc. Christmas Show (Christmas on the Prado)	Fri: 5pm-9:00pm Sat:11am-9:00pm	Sun:11am-4:00pm

## Killing Cactus and Other Succulents

### Haworthia Translucens

This is one of a series comparing Bruce Bayer's, John Pilbeam's and Charles Scott's taxonomic treatment of the genus *Haworthia*.

The more you think you know, the less you know you know - old *Haworthia* collector's proverb. And never is this more true than when one looks at the sharp disagreement between Bruce Bayer and Charles Scott over *H. translucens*. Bayer and Scott disagree about both what the species is and where it grows (Pilbeam follows Bayer). No given locality and other (presumably) inadequate data in Haworth's 184 year old description facilitate these present-day differences.

For Bayer, *H. translucens* is a species complex of the Eastern Cape, centered in the Gamtoos River Valley but strung out in a narrow east-west band running over a much larger area. He regards the composition of *H. translucens* as "very unclear," noting that as many as eight other *haworthia* species growing in the same area or nearby may contribute to it. Bayer's *H. translucens* thus has many different forms, some (or perhaps many) of them quite pretty. Forms may be attractive both for their graceful shape as well as for their coloring, some of them acquiring beautiful shades of purple in good light.

Unfortunately for the hobbyist here, these attractive forms are seldom available, if at all, and thus not well-known, with the result that the beauty of *H. translucens* is often underrated.

Scott, at least in print, shares none of Bayer's uncertainties about the species. In his view, *H. translucens* is not the plant most collectors know under that name and which is the one portrayed in Bayer's Handbooks. Scott's *H. translucens* is a species of the Great Karoo, a finding he bases on a 1811 (1812?) illustration of a plant then called *Aloe arachnoidea* v. *translucens* which he says agrees with Haworth's description of "*Aloe translucens*." (Haworthias were originally grouped with the aloes.) The 1811 illustration, which Scott reproduces in his book, resembles a plant which appears to be one of the many forms of *H. arachnoidea*. Scott's photograph of his *H. translucens* also appears to be of a plant close or identical to *H. arachnoidea*. (This writer, who has never seen a *haworthia* in the field, is trying not to make judgements, but opinions keep leaking out.)

The species, or complex, breaks down as follows.

Bruce Bayer and John Pilbeam:

1. *H. translucens* v. *translucens*: The easy way to describe this form is to say it is variable - narrow to broad leafed, hairy edged or smooth, not or seldom or fairly rapidly offsetting, and a rosette in size roughly from one to three inches. Bayer includes in this form *H. gracilis* as well as *H. isabellae*. Even as Bayer places *H. isabellae* in *H. translucens*, he shows uncertainty over its exact identity. A pretty form is occasionally available here under the name *H. isabellae*, however, and is obviously a member of the *H. translucens* group. Hobbyists should also know that the true identity of a dark-green, pellucid-spotted plant in circulation for some years here under the name *H. gracilis* or *H. translucens* is quite uncertain.

2. *H. translucens* v. *tenera*: This is an attractive, consistently small, offsetting form growing some distance east of the main complex. Both glabrous and haired forms exist, with the former being less often seen. Southern California collectors should be alert to *H. marumiana* forms offered under this name as well as instances here, one hopes in the past, of the offering of a doubtful form under the name of *H. tenera* v. *major*.

Charles Scott:

1. *H. translucens*: A beautiful plant, whatever one may wish to call it.

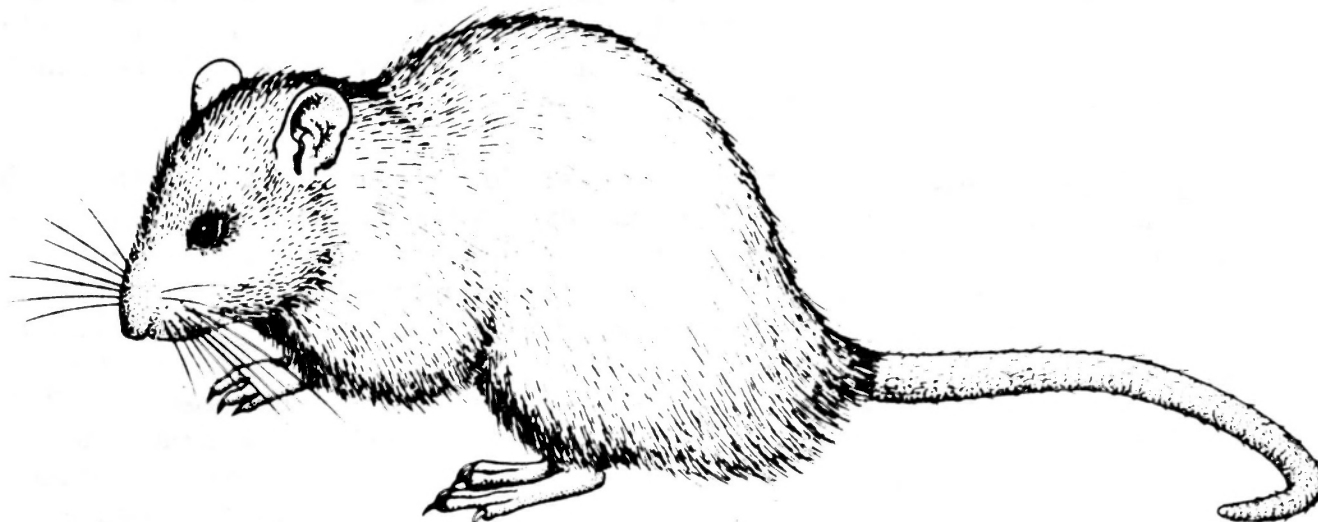
2. *H. tenera*: In this species, Scott unites Bayer's *H. translucens* v. *tenera* and (it appears) the *translucens* forms which Bayer places in and near the Gamtoos River Valley, including *H. isabellae* but omitting *H. gracilis*. He dismisses differences between Bayer's two varieties as resulting from environmental conditions. Scott does not touch upon *H. translucens* forms which Bayer says are found for some distance to the west of the Gamtoos River Valley.

3. *H. gracilis*: Scott maintains as a separate species the *H. gracilis* which Bayer places under *H. translucens* v. *translucens*. Scott's text suggests that he may take a somewhat broader view than Bayer of what comprises the *H. gracilis* form.

## Pests of Succulent Plants

### Part XII. Rodents and lagomorphs.

Dr. Ronald E. Monroe



Norway Rat

Rodents are seldom considered as pests of succulent plants; however, it is all too common for a rat or mouse to take residence either in or near a greenhouse (or shade-house or any other succulent staging area) and become either a general nuisance or inflict direct irreparable damage to cacti and other succulent plants.

Systematics -- Rabbits and hares are usually thought of as rodents, but they really are members of the order Lagomorpha. In the West, hares encountered are jack rabbits (Lepus sp.); as a rule, rabbits throughout the U.S. are brush rabbits or cottontails (Sylvilagus sp.). The true rodents belong to the order Rodentia, and it is this group that is most apt to cause problems. Rodents commonly causing plant damage are: beechey ground squirrel (Spermophilus beecheyi), pocket mice (Perognathus sp.), brush or cactus mice (Peromyscus sp.), house mouse (Mus musculus), woodrats (Neotoma sp.), Norway rat (Rattus norvegicus) and the black or roof rat (Rattus rattus). Occasionally, the pocket gopher (Thomomys sp.) is a pest of field-grown plants. To describe the individual species is difficult because skull, etc. morphology is all-important in rodent keys. Most of these animals are nocturnal and will seldom be seen; their faecal droppings and plant damage are most commonly noted by growers and hobbyists and this is sufficient to alert one to their presence.

Plant damage -- Although rabbits and hares seldom cause damage, there have been moments of real despair and concern when these lagomorphs harm plants by digging burrows beneath them, knocking over potted plants or eating "leafy" succulents. Rats, squirrels and mice are the most common rodent pests (rats and squirrels being the most important of all)

to be found anywhere. Squirrels are diurnal, burrow into the nursery or collection area and are easily seen. However, rats are nocturnal, wary and except for their droppings are seldom ever seen. All of these animals not only gnaw on potted plants per se, but relish the fruits, and seed is so prized that it is often a real contest as to whom will harvest first -- man or rodent (the latter usually wins!). Too, pots are knocked over, plants uprooted and seed beds may be completely dug up in a single evening. Mice of all species can be a real disaster toward propagation because they eat or foul stored succulent seeds.

Biology -- Hares do not make a nest for their young. Rather, the mother hare gives birth to open-eyed young with teeth (quite ready to care for themselves within a short time) and there are infrequent broods per year (usually spring and early summer with three to five young per brood). Rabbits do make nests (in burrows in the soil, brush, fence rows, etc.) and their young are born blind, naked and quite helpless and must be cared for by the mother for several weeks. There are several generations per year in the spring and early summer with four to six young per brood. Ground squirrels build nests in burrows and give birth to helpless young (three to six) only in the spring. Rats and mice build nests (between building walls, in burrows and in thick vegetation of all types including palm trees, ice plant and ivy). They give birth in continuous year-long cycles (the females commonly become pregnant while they are still nursing young) with three to six young per brood.

Control -- Rabbits and hares are best not controlled by poisons. Rather, the concept of "exclusion" is best considered (fences, roaming dogs, etc.). Ground squirrels can be controlled by placing grain coated with strychnine within their burrows, but care must be exercised that none can be seen from above because seed-eating birds will seek out and eat the bait as well. The best means of rat/mouse control is the bait station containing grain coated with some anticoagulant such as Warfarin<sup>(R)</sup>. One such product which is readily available is d-Con<sup>(R)</sup>. Warfarin<sup>(R)</sup> is a coumarin which requires repeated ingestion over a period of several days, leaving the unsuspecting rodents growing weaker daily. The compounds are thus considered relatively safe, since repeated accidental ingestion would be required to produce serious illness. Too, such baits are extremely effective because wise rats do not develop "bait shyness" (Ware, 1978). Such bait stations should be generally distributed throughout the greenhouse or collection area.

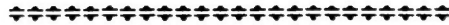
#### References cited

Ware, George W. 1978. The Pesticide Book. W.H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco. 197 pp.

From February 1980 issue E y F

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

Ray and Irene Eastham - San Diego



PELARGONIUM LOBATUM

by Wilna Johnson

Pelargonium lobatum has to be my favorite species in this genus, that is a hard decision to make for most of them are all favorites. Not only is it rare, it has peculiar growing habits. I haven't seen this plant exhibited or know of anyone that has it in their collection.

P. lobatum is a large irregularly shaped tuber enclosed with scaly bark. The leaves and inflorescens sprout from a very short stem. That is the way it should be growing but at times the umbels will be on a twelve inch stem. The three-lobed leaves are very large and as the plant ages it will have four or five very large leaves, and more flowers. Most of the leaves are divided and sometimes given to separate leaflets. This takes place once a year in the spring and lasts a couple of months.

The flower has a very delicious smell of cinnamon in the late afternoon and night. They are almost black in color with a yellow-green margin. Six of the ten filaments bear anthers.

This species is confined to the South Western and Southern Cape, occurring from Fiketberg to the district of George, growing against hillsides and in sandy flats.

Small tubers are supposed to appear on the original tuber but in four years I've not seen one yet. The seed pods never seem to mature.

P. lobatum is one of the parents of P. x ardens that was exhibited in the last show and open house.

Reference:

Van der Walt, J. J. A.. Pelargoniums of Southern Africa.

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# SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OFFICERS

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The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is open to all persons interested in growing cacti or other succulent and exotic plants. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at 1:30 p.m. 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 the family. Single copies of Espinas y Flores are 60¢.

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