

# ESPINAS Y FLORES



The Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Inc.  
Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

Volume 38 Number 12  
NOON  
Saturday December 13th 2003  
Room 101 Casa Dei Prado, Balboa Park



# Presidents Message

November 16, 2003

**I**t was great to see so many of you out for the meeting on November 8th. There were nearly a hundred members and guests in attendance making for a lively get together. The membership voted to accept the new Board of Directors for the next two years. The new Board will consist of: Lee Badger, Jeanette Dutton, John Durham, Spencer Maze, Chris Miller, Terry Parr and Herb Stern. These are the people, along with the officers, who make plans and organize events for our Society so if you have ideas they are good people to talk to as well as expressing your appreciation of their volunteering. I look forward to working with you all!

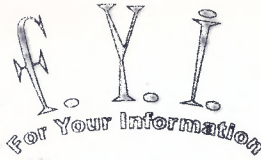
We had quite a diverse program of talks in November. Rudy Lime talked with us about *Pelargoniums* and *Sarcocallums* - these certainly are not my grandmother geraniums! Rudy is such a master at growing and training these amazing plants into beautiful bonsai! I was relieved to hear that he has plants die on him sometimes too! ...I was pleased to be able to talk about *Rhipsalis* and their role in the evolution of cactus and hope this gets more of you thinking about the natural history of plants. There was a wonderful array of brag plants, thanks to all of you who make the effort to bring in plants to share - not just this month but throughout the year. Even if your plant does not win an award be assured that many people get great pleasure out of seeing this variety of outstanding plants each month. Woody Minnich did a fine job of judging the brag plants before he presented his program - and what a great program it was! The trip to Brazil looked like quite an adventure - and I bet it will be a long time before he goes out hiking without water again.... Be more careful Woody - we all value you too much to see you become

buzzard bait! THANKS for the great program.

It has been a eventful year for our Society - Winter Show, Spring Home/Garden Show, EarthFair, June Show and Sale, picnic and now the Holiday Party is upon us once again. It has been a pleasure to welcome many to faces to our group and hope to see many of you in the coming year helping out at various events - it really is great fun and a way to get to know other members better as we work together. MANY THANKS to all of you who have done so much to make this Society what it is!

Next year we are planning some fun events also. Our WINTER SHOW has been moved to February and will be held on the 14th - Valentines Day - so plan now to bring your sweetheart to the show! We are planning a special meeting in January - a CHILE FEST. Instead of our regular format we are going to have three mini-programs with members talking about their recent trips to Chile. To compliment this special program we will be having a little CHILE COOK OFF for the break. All of you who think you make killer Chile are invited to bring in a pot to share. Look for more details in the January newsletter.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL - see you on the 13th for the Holiday Party...  
Pam Badger.... [pambadge@earthlink.net](mailto:pambadge@earthlink.net)



## MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

Joe Kraatz is putting the final information in the Membership roster for The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society. For all of those members who have not been able to sign up at the monthly meetings and wish to be included in the roster please phone Joe Kraatz at 760 758 7042 or e-mail: [plantnut@cox.net](mailto:plantnut@cox.net) with information. Distribution of the Membership roster will be done at the Holiday Party in December.

We are pleased to re-print in part the Log of the Multidisciplinary Natural History Expedition to the southern end of the Sierra de la Giganta between Agua Verde and Punta Mechudo. SDC&SS Member and SDNHM Curator of Botany Jon Rebman heads Team Botany. Join us in the next few issues of Espinas Y Flores for details of this historic expedition.

## HOLIDAY PARTY -- DECEMBER 13 TH - 12:00 NOON - EAT AT 12:30

12:00 Come early and enjoy a libation at the open bar

Look over the gift plants - all members will get a chance to select a free plant

Bring an exchange plant - this is a fun, optional exchange - it works like this:

Bring a plant to give away - all the exchange plants will be looked over by one of our resident experts who will select a favorite (that plant will be auctioned off later) the person who brought that plant then gets to select from the remaining plants - and that plants owner then picks - and on and on...

12:30 Lets Eat! Top Hat Catering will once again be laying out a feast of turkey and all the trimmings.

1:00 Special Presentation

1:30 Judging of the Adeniums -- last year everyone who attended picked out a small Adenium to grow and bring in to show off. Be sure to bring your plant!

2:00 Mini- Auction-- left over gift plants will be auctioned off - a good chance to get a special gift for yourself!

And don't forget -- DESSERT BUFFET Bring your favorite goody to share with all!



# Plant Rescue 2003

By Pam Badger

**T**hough all the heavy work has taken place in the last six months, this story had its start over ten years ago when Lee met a wonderful old couple with an impressive succulent garden. He was making his rounds, on the hunt for the Mexican fruit fly for the State of California on the back side of Mt Helix in La Mesa, when he met Ruby and Stan. They had been active members of our society in the distant past and had skillfully planted many specimen cacti and succulents in their yard. Ruby, having many other interests and



getting up in age, was unable care for all her collection and offered to sell Lee some of her plants. As we looked over her collection of potted plants, we were greatly impressed by incredible specimens which they had planted in the ground many years before.

The landscape included huge *Pachypodiums* and *Ferocactus*; magnificent "silver torch" *Cleistocactus*; a



massive *Beaucarnia* and *Bombax ellipticum* tree; an *Aloe ramosissima* tree as big as a Volkswagen; a perfect ten tall foot, 'Mexican old man,' *Cephalocereus senilis* and a very rare *Didierea madagascariensis* - twelve feet tall! At the time she offered us a few of the large plants at a minimal charge - happy just to pass them along to our landscape, knowing we would care for and appreciate them.

Fast forward ten years to late 2002. We got a call from a contractor





process, but for now I wanted to share some of the pictures of the process and the excitement I feel to have these great plants and to carry on the love which nurtured them for so long. This experience has reinforced for me that I do not own the plants I grow - rather they are wonders of nature that I am humbled to be allowed to care for.

who had bought the Winters home. Ruby had passed on and Stan was moving out of town and had left the contractor our number in case he wanted to get rid of any plants. Well, this contractor is one of those odd people who "hate cactus," and said he would bulldoze whatever we did not take.



As luck would have it, his plans for the house were put on hold and we had plenty of time to rescue many of the plants. This has been a well planned, monumental effort, which many of our friends have been very generous in lending their muscle (not to mention blood, sweat and tears) to accomplish.



Lee has offered to write more details of the engineering part of this

# Agua Verde - Punta Machudo

## Expedition of 2003

### Summary



A team of approximately 30 scientists were invited to take part in a natural history expedition to explore the Sierra de la Giganta in Baja California Sur. The scientists represented multiple disciplines, including botany, herpetology, mammalogy, ornithology, entomology, and paleontology. For 19 days beginning November 5, 2003, these researchers from Mexico and the United States conducted fieldwork at the southern end of the Sierra de la Giganta between Agua Verde and Punta Mechudo.

The primary emphases of the expedition was to observe, record, and collect natural history information on the biodiversity and geology of the study site. This scientific endeavor also provided a unique opportunity for the basic natural history information gained from field research to be applied to conservation efforts currently in process to preserve this important area. Besides the biological value of the region, archaeological remains of indigenous cultures have been found in the Sierra de la Giganta. Of additional cultural interest is the old mission trail that passed through the study area, connecting to the mission (now in ruins) at Los Dolores.

Due to the remoteness and inaccessibility of this area, it has had very little scientific investigation or documentation. As a consequence, the region is a sort of biogeographical void whose distributions of flora and fauna have not yet been assessed. An advantage of this isolation is that plants and animals are relatively untouched, with presumed little impact from non-native species. During a preliminary visit in October 2001, Jon Rebman, the Museum's Curator of Botany, spent three days in the Agua Verde village area, which yielded several noteworthy botanical discoveries. It is anticipated that a more thorough exploration will produce even more exciting finds, for animals as well as for plants.





photo by Bradford Hollingsworth

## EXPEDITION LOG:

### DAY ONE

*Wednesday, November 5, 2003  
San Diego to Cataviña, Baja California  
Transmitted from our quick camp by an  
Apple computer hooked to a Qual-  
comm/GlobalstarUSA satellite phone.*

#### **Getting the Show on the Road**

The Binational Expedition officially began today. Research teams left the Museum parking lot early in the morning, packing up base-camp supplies, research equipment, and food. Every vehicle was filled with crates, boxes, and bags. After months of planning and preparation, everyone was excited to start the caravan southward. Once we figured out how to fit the equipment, we started up the engines and said our farewells.

Crossing the border went smoothly and the procession headed down the toll road. Along the way, we stopped at the Universidad Autonoma Baja California (UABC) in Ensenada to pick up Mexican researchers and students. If the cars weren't full before, they were certainly full now. At this point, the expedition caravan had become more of a straggled, loosely con-

nected group of trucks and vans. Jon Rebman, the Curator of Botany, was out in front, while logistics personnel and the remaining researchers fell behind to get their tourist cards, exchange money, and thankfully eat fish tacos.

In Cataviña, we met up again and decided to stop for the night. We had traveled 300 miles down the peninsula and a quick camp was made under the boojums, cardón cactus, and elephant trees. Many of us had worked up to the moment of departure, so settling in for a peaceful night under the stars was a blessing we couldn't wait to take advantage of. All of us went to bed with anticipation and excitement. There was still a long ways to go before our first base-camp would be made in Arroyo Los Dolores along the coast of the Sea of Cortés in the remote Sierra de La Giganta.

*Bradford Hollingsworth  
Expedition Coordinator  
From my tent at 9:45pm*

### DAY TWO

*Thursday, November 6, 2003  
Cataviña to Ensenada Blanca, Baja  
California  
Transmitted from camp by an Apple  
computer hooked to a Qual-  
comm/GlobalstarUSA satellite phone.*

#### **Arriving at Ensenada Blanca: First Assembly Area**

We woke up to a beautiful morning in Cataviña. It is a place where giant granite boulders emerge from the landscape and endemic, arid-adapted plants abound. We hadn't unpacked the trucks and vans fully, so

what we did take out was easily packed again. We were underway earlier and continued our journey southward.

At San Ignacio, BCS, we stopped for a rest and to eat lunch. San Ignacio has always been a safe, peaceful harbor for the Baja traveler. Its mission, town-square, and people offer a relaxing atmosphere in this desert oasis town. The effects of the two hurricanes were evident, with washed-out roads and scoured ponds. Five months ago, the ponds were lined with vegetation. Now, many of their banks were simply mud and rock.



photo by Bradford Hollingsworth

From San Ignacio, onward, the peninsula is green. Flowers line the roadside and plants are full with leaves. In most years, the desert is bark-brown and the soils are easily seen. Now, the desert is growing, with hardly a direction seen that isn't green.

The herpetologist found a Baja California ratsnake just south of Loreto. It was DOR, or dead on the road, but will still make fine specimen. Baja California ratsnakes appear to be more active in the Fall months, so it isn't unusual to see them at this time of year.

Team Botany was again out in front. They arrived at the first Assembly Area in Ensenada Blanca. Before they arrived, they had one small problem: They had to find it! With the help of the locals, they were directed from the highway through a maze of dirt roads. Many were so thick with vegetation that it appeared they hadn't been traveled on in decades.

When the rest of us showed up, after dark, we were in luck. Team Botany had remembered to leave their radios turned on. They heard our lost chatter and with the flick of their headlights, we spotted them a few miles away across the small embayment. I look forward to waking up and seeing the area in full light. Even at night it appears to be stunning.

*Bradford Hollingsworth  
Expedition Coordinator  
From camp at 11:30pm  
DAY THREE*

*Friday, November 7, 2003  
Ensenada Blanca, Baja California  
Transmitted from camp by an Apple  
computer hooked to a Qual-  
comm/GlobalstarUSA satellite phone.*

## **Ensenada Blanca**

Ensenada Blanca is located about 22 miles south of Loreto along the Gulf of California coastline. It isn't a



bad place to have to wait around for the expedition teams to arrive. The Sierra de La Giganta make for a nice backdrop and the view of Isla Danzante is front and center over the water. We were able to unload our gear onto the beach and everyone is now accounted for, including the KPBS crew. Our boats arrived and we began staging our equipment forward, by sending two pangas to the first base-camp at Los Dolores.

While waiting for everyone to arrive, Team Botany got a chance to go on a short hike to the east side of Ensenada Blanca. During the hike, they discovered a population of *Brickellia megaphylla* which is only known from a couple of populations near Loreto and Cerro Mechudo. This is a rare find of a narrowly endemic plant species. We selectively collected a few other uncommon species from the region, documenting them for the first time at this location.



*megaphylla.*

photo by Bradford Hollingsworth



photo by Bradford Hollingsworth

The Herpetologists kept busy hiking as well. Their find of the day was a Baja California Coachwhip snake (*Masticophis fuliginosus*) hunting the numerous Zebra-tailed lizards (*Callisaurus draconoides*). This Baja endemic is a diurnal hunter that is fast and aggressive. It is characterized by having a large eye and slender, agile body.

While snorkeling off of Ensenada Blanca, Paticia Beller had a chance to observe a number of fish species. Of special interest was the blue with white-banded juvenile *Holocentrus zonipectus*. The juvenile of this species is rarely seen in this region of the Gulf of California.

Our departure for Los Dolores is scheduled for 7:00am which includes preparation of gear and loading the boats before this. So, I'll have to leave it at that. Time for bed.

*Bradford Hollingsworth  
Expedition Coordinator  
From Ensenada Blanca at 11:15pm*

*To be continued.....*



## November Brag Table Winners

Judged by Woody Minnich  
Recorded by Shirley Berry

### Cactus

- |                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. <i>Neogomesia agavoides</i>     | Jurgen Menzel |
| 2. <i>Mammillaria canalensis</i>   | Kelly Griffen |
| 3. <i>Turbinicarpus panarottoi</i> | Jurgen Menzel |

### Succulents

- |                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <i>Myrmecodia sp.</i>           | Kelly Griffen     |
| 2. <i>Euphorbia pedilanthoides</i> | Rudy Lime         |
| 3. <i>Dioscorea elephantipes</i>   | Marylin Henderson |

# Upcoming Events

## 2003

**October 11–12** **Central Florida C&SS Plant Sale** in conjunction with the Botanical Gardens at USF in Tampa, Florida, off Fowler Avenue. 10am to 4pm. Contact Vicki Hunter at 1-800-226-2527 ext. 448

**October 17–18** **9th Xeriscape Conference: *Water: Our Future ... Our Legacy***. Our two confirmed water keynoters are: **Dr Peter Gleick** and **Amy Vickers**. **Dr Gleick** is President of the Pacific Institute and author of *The World's Water 2002-2003*. He will open the conference on Friday with a report on the global water situation. **Amy Vickers**, of Amherst, Mass., is author of the *Handbook of Water – Use and Conservation* and will keynote the Saturday session. We have also invited **Governor Richardson** to kick-off the conference on Friday morning. Other confirmed speakers include: **Dr Katherine Gleason**, Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department, Cornell University, who has excavated ancient gardens in the Mediterranean to reveal their structure for utilization of water; **Tom Swetnam**, Director of the Tree Ring Lab at the University of Arizona; **Mike Kernodle**, former USGS hydrologist who studied New Mexico water availability; **Doug Bennett**, formerly with Albuquerque Water Conservation Office and now implementing conservation measures in Las Vegas, NV; Additional speakers will be announced soon. For more information visit our web site. Register early on our secure web site—<http://www.xeriscape.nm.com> (All major charge cards) At the Albuquerque Convention Center and Exhibit Hall. Fee for the 2-day conference will remain \$100.00. This fee includes program materials, lunch both days and access to the exhibit hall where we plan on about 100 booths/exhibitors! Mail registration to Xeriscape Council, PO Box 14311, Albuquerque, NM 87191. More details from Scott Varner—e-mail: [scott@xeriscape.nm.com](mailto:scott@xeriscape.nm.com)

**October 18–19** **Orange County C&SS Show and Sale**, Fullerton Arboretum

**October 18–19** **San Gabriel Valley C&SS Show and Sale**, LA Arboretum.

## 2004

**January 17** : CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**February 14**: SDC&SS Winter Show and Sale - Feb. 14, 2004 -- 10 am- 4pm -- Casa del Prado, room 101, Balboa Park, San Diego.

**April 17** : CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**May 3 - 5** : **Sonoran V Conference** at Inn Suites Hotel (formerly the Ramada Inn) Theme will be BAJA. Speakers and workshops. Tentative plans include Friday night pre-conference dinner, speaker and opening of the plant sales area for all members and conference participants. Conference opening will be on Saturday morning for registrants. Show and Sale open to public. Silent auction, raffle and a special dinner on Saturday night featuring recipes utilizing cacti, succulents and other desert plants. Number of registrants will be limited to 100.

**June 11 - 13** : **Mid-West Conference** Hosted by River City C&SS and Mid-Iowa C&SS. Travel Lodge, Council Bluffs, Iowa. Details: Kathy Bokelman 402-592-1355 or e-mail her at [Kathy@katbroker.com](mailto:Kathy@katbroker.com)

**July 1 - 3** : **CSSA Show and Sale** at HBG (Note: HBG closed on July 4) Entrance to HBG is free on July 1, 2004.

**August 20 - 22** : **14th Eastern C&S Conference** at the DoubleTree Guest Suites in Plymouth Meeting PA. Hosted by the Philadelphia C&SS. While you're there, enjoy Longwood Gardens and Morris Arboretum, world-class museums and a brand new baseball stadium. For more info contact Co-chairpersons, Rita Hojnowski 856-227-0599 [ritabhoj@comcast.net](mailto:ritabhoj@comcast.net) or Elayne Toizer e-mail: [atoizer@aol.com](mailto:atoizer@aol.com) or tel: 215-233-2965 ***Succulent Lovers, Unite!!!***

**August 21** : **British C&SS National Show**, Spalding Exhibition Centre, Springfield, Spalding, Lincs, England.

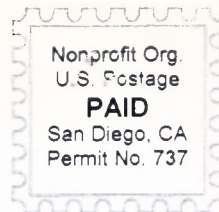
**September 4** : **21st Huntington Symposium** at Huntington Botanical Gardens.

**September 5** : **CSSA Board Meeting**, Huntington Botanical Gardens.

**Mid-October** : **CSSA Tour** to Chile, home to *Copiapoa*, *Eriosyce*, *Eulychnia* and others. See request for applications and itinerary in last issue of *To The Point*.



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