

MAMMILLARIA THORNERI

# Espinas y Flores

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

Volume XXII, Number 6

June 13, 1987

## JUNE MEETING

Picnic Details Page 5

Saturday June 13, 1987

10:30 A.M.



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IN THIS ISSUE	Page
NEWS NEWS NEWS . . . . .	2 & 5
The Kei-Apple by Dr. Bruce J. Hargreaves. . . . .	3
Blossfeldia by Dr. Ronald E. Monroe. . . . .	4

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Deadline for the July Issue of Espina Y Flores is June 27 Thanks Mary

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Bob Kent has volunteered to answer questions of a botanical nature in the paper. Any questions about the operation of the club will be answered by Martin Mooney. If you have any questions please send them to me and I will forward them to right person. Please allow enough time before deadline of the paper.

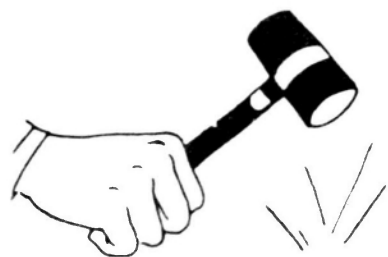
NEWS NEWS NEWS - - - - -

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

David K. Cheng - El Centro  
Theodore G. Nelson - Alpine  
Florence Sakely - San Diego

Dave & Katherine Phillips - England  
Susan Wessman - San Diego,

FROM THE BOARD.....



The purchase of a new public address system was approved by the Board.

A new method of awarding the trophies was announced. Following the Show the trophies will be collected, sent out for engraving, and presented to the individual winners at the next regular meeting.

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BRAGGING TABLE WINNERS FOR MAY.....

- 1st Place - Teresita Lime for her Euphorbia duranii
- 2nd Place - Beverly Kent for her Haworthia coarctata  
v. chalwinii
- 3rd Place - Beverly Kirkegaard, for her Maihuenia poeppigii

Dr. David K. Cheng, our new member from Imperial Valley is particularly interested in GASTERIA. He would like to get in touch with members with the same interest. His home address is:  
1887 Haskell Drive, El Centro, Ca. 92243. Or call 619-352-0238.

Sincerely

*David K. Cheng*  
David K. Cheng

### The Kei-Apple

"The kei-apple [Dovyalis caffra\* (Hook.f. & Harv.) Hook.f.] is known to many gardeners as a spiny shrub which makes a stout, impenetrable hedge. It can grow, however, as high as 30 feet, and in tree form it is sometimes free of the thorns which characterize the shrub.

The fruit is roundish, with a diameter of from 1 to 1½ inches, velvety, and bright yellow when ripe, with a very acid flavour.

...very drought resistant. It is commonly supposed to be very tender to frost, but it can be surprizingly hardy.

The Kei-apple takes its name from the river Kei, which is a Hottentot [Khoi khoi] name meaning "sand" or "white" (Palmer and Pitman, 1961).

"The fruit resembles the apricot and, although very acid, is edible. It makes an excellant jelly or preserve" (Watt and Breyer-Brandwijk, 1962).

The Kei-apple occurs in South Africa, Moçambique, Zimbabwe and Mala<sup>^</sup>wi. According to Fox and Young (1982) there are seven other edible species of Dovyalis.

It belongs to the family Flacourtiaceae which is named for the genus Flacourtia which also occurs in southern Africa as the species Flacourtia indica. There is some disagreement as to whether Flacourtia indica is edible. Williamson (1972) says, "The fruit is reported to be edible and wellflavoured." Palgrave and Palgrave (1957), on the other hand say, "The fruits are not usually eaten ... as they cause upset stomachs."

\*I apologize for using a racist name, but I did not name this plant.

### References

- Fox, F.W. and Young, M. 1982. Food from the Veld, Delta Books, Johannesburg.
- Palmer, E. and Pitman, N. 1961. Trees of South Africa, A.A. Balkema, Cape Town.
- Watt, J.M. and Breyer-Brandwijk, M.G. 1962. Medicinal and Poisonous Plants of Southern and Eastern Africa, 2nd ed., Livingstone, Edinburgh and London.
- Williamson, J. 1972. Useful Plants of Mala<sup>^</sup>wi, Government Printer, Zomba.
- Palgrave, O.H. and Palgrave, K.C. 1957. Trees of Central Africa, National Publications Trust, Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

## Cactus-of-the-Month

### Blossfeldia

Dr. Ronald E. Monroe

The genus Blossfeldia (named by E. Werdermann for H. Blossfeld who collected the type plant in 1936) has the distinction and fascination of being the smallest of all the cacti. Originally, this tiny plant was thought to be found only from Jujuy to Catamarca, Argentina, but F. Ritter later found plants in the departments of Cochabamba and Chuquisaca, Bolivia, growing on mountainous slopes at ca. 1500 to 2000 m. The exact number of species in the genus is not known. Backeberg (1977) considered six species and one variety as proper to the genus; however, Barthlott (1979) considered that H. Krainz was correct in stating that all species discovered since the original type are best regarded as varieties of B. liliputana. Thus, there is one species and six varieties (Barthlott, 1979). Still, there are others who claim that such a wide dispersion of the plant must include more than one species, and they have included three species and two varieties and two to three forms as proper to the genus (Anon., 1974).

Blossfeldia are spineless and lack ribs; areoles are minute and spiraled. The plants are 5 - 15 mm diameter and are greyish-green to deep green in color. They possess a small taproot and are caespitose with age. The flowers are whitish (or tinged with yellow) and ca. 10 mm long and open only in bright, sunny weather. The seed is like that of Frailea in being finely hairy.

In habitat, Blossfeldia may possess flowers that are often incompletely developed and tend to give one the impression that they are degenerate (Barthlott, 1979). However, this may be due to ecological specialization in that the plants dry out so much that they become mere paper-thin discs; yet they plump up when the rains fall, but are incapable of producing well-developed flowers except after several "good" years.

These tiny cacti are not very popular as potted plants and may be considered as difficult by many who have tried to grow them. In habitat they grow pressed close to the rocky soil which contains very little humus or moisture. Few try to grow these plants on their own roots and most will resort to grafted plants which soon lose their natural growth form. However, grafting is recommended unless the propagator is sparse with water and allows the plants to rest (sans water) for long periods of time.

Plants occasionally found in cultivation are B. liliputana and its varieties: v. campaniflora, v. caineana, v. fechseri, v. pedicellata, v. atroviridis and v. minima.

Pests of these plants are not documented and it can only be guessed that various fungi and the Sciara sp. fly would be the worst enemy of plants on their own roots while stem rot is serious on grafted plants.

MORE NEWS

SHOW SCHEDULE FOR JUNE AND JULY

June 6 & 7	SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SHOW	Sat: 1; m-5:00pm	Sun: 10am-5:00pm
June 14	Southwest Hemerocallis Society 14th Show		Sun: Noon-5:00pm
June 20 & 21	San Diego Fuchsia & Shade Plant Show	Sat: Noon-5:00pm	Sun: 10am-5:00pm
July 5	San Diego Dahlia Society Specimen Show		Sun: 1pm-4:30pm
July 12	Convair Garden Club 36th Summer Show		Sun: 1pm-4:30pm

PICNIC AND PLANT AUCTION

COME TO THE ANNUAL SDC&SS PICNIC !

Day: June 13, 1987

Time: 10:30 to 11:00 am - Eat at 12:00 NOON TILL -----

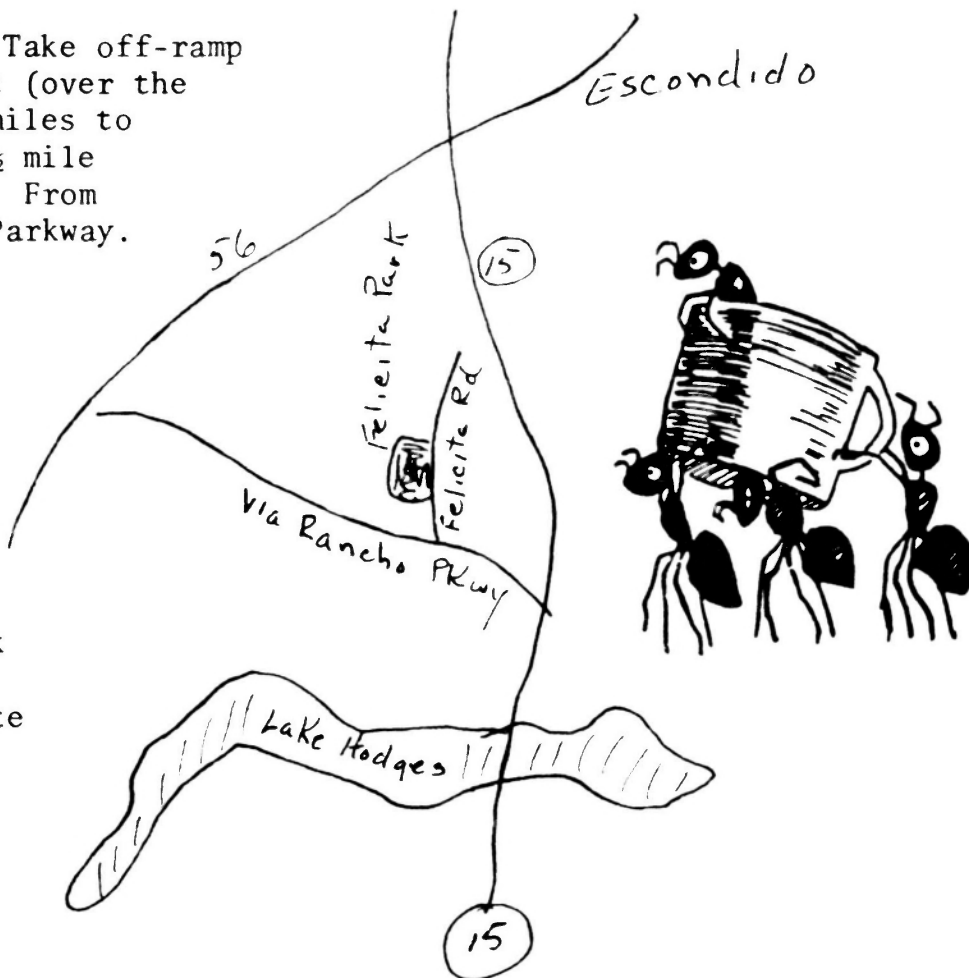
Place: Felicita Park - Map at right

From San Diego - North on I-15. Take off-ramp at Via Rancho Parkway and go west (over the highway I-15) Approximately 1½ miles to Felicita Road, Turn RIGHT. Go ½ mile to entrance of park on the LEFT. From the North - turn off Via Rancho Parkway. Area #4 will have the San Diego Cactus and Succulent sign in View.

NOTE: There will be "Door" Prizes and an Auction.  
Auctioneer - Lee Phelps

Please Bring - A Pot luck dish enough for eight (8). Your favorite beach chair (or use park benches)  
Casual clothes and a good appetite

Plan for a day of good food and fun.



# SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

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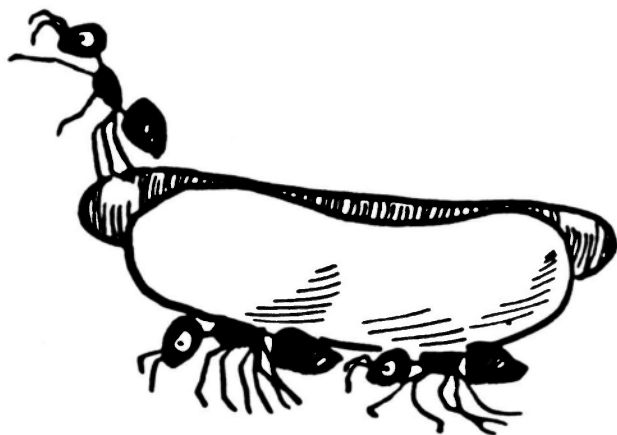
## COMMITTEES

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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 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 a family. Single copies of Espinas y Flores ~~are available~~

Editor  
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