



Espinas y Flores

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

XIX, Number 1

January 14, 1984

JANUARY MEETING
Saturday January 14, 1984
1:30 PM
Casa Del Prado, Room 101, Balboa Park

PROGRAM

VICTOR TURCEK

Victor will present a slide program on Cactii of Argentina, South America. Victor has explored and photographed most of this country which abound in Cactii of many and various Genus. He is also a native of Argentina. His programs are humerous and very informative.

MEMBERS - Please bring from your collections your Tephrocactus species to the January meeting. If we all bring a few plants we can fill the VIP table for display.

IN THIS ISSUE	Page
The Genus Kalanchoe by Dorothy Dunn.	2
Tephrocactus Lemaire by Frank Thrombly.	4
NEWS NEWS NEWS.	5

Our December meeting worked out very well. There were many contributors to the special plant exchange. Enough food for seconds - delicious too - and many wonderful gift plants to everyone who attended. Hope every enjoyed it as much as I did. Thanks to all who made it such a success.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT MONTH - JANUARY 28 - Have a very Happy New Year - MARY

SUCCULENT-OF-THE-MONTH

THE GENUS KALANCHOE

By Dorothy Dunn

The plants in the genus Kalanchoe belong to the huge Crassulaceae family, and are native primarily to the warmer parts of the Old World. They are widely distributed throughout Africa, Madagascar, Southern Arabia, China, India, and Malaysia. The genus was first described in 1763 by Adanson, and the name "Kalanchoe" is derived from the Chinese name for one of the species. It is correctly pronounced kal-an-koh'-ee.

Taxonomically, the genus has a rather complex history; of the approximately 230 species once described, at least 100 names have been sunk into synonymy. The genus is broken down into three sections: Kitchingia, Bryophyllum, and Kalanchoe. There are only seven or eight species of Kitchingia; they are all from Madagascar and are seldom cultivated. There are over twenty species of Bryophyllum. The name means "sprouting leaf", and they come mostly from Madagascar. This section includes such familiar plants as K. daigremontianum, K. tubiflorum and the hybrid of these two plants ("Houghton's Hybrid"), as well as K. prolifera, K. manginii, K. pinnata, K. fedtschenkoi, and K. beauverdii, which is reputed to have the only mouse-colored flower known. Bryophyllums can be distinguished by their pendant flowers and prolific production of plantlets along the leaf margins, and are now routinely included in the section Kalanchoe.

Most of our commonly-grown plants of this genus fall into the section Kalanchoe, which is by far the largest in the group, numbering well over 200 species and characterized by upright or erect flowers. They are mostly easy, rewarding plants to grow, and range in size from the tiny K. jongmansii and K. rotundifolia to the familiar tree-like K. beharensis. In between there are many moderately-sized plants with a great diversity of foliage color and texture and brilliant long-lasting flowers in a wide range of shades. Since they bloom mostly during our winter months, they are an especially welcome addition to our gardens. Some are also sweetly-scented, notably K. grandiflora, which has bluish-purple leaves and yellow, lemon-scented flowers, and the tropical-looking K. modoc, which has lush green leaves (unusual in a Kalanchoe) and fragrant pink flowers. One of the choicest Kalanchoes is K. pumila, with powdery lavender and maroon leaves and pinkish-purple flowers. It makes an outstanding hanging-basket specimen, but can also be effectively utilized as a ground-cover.

Many Kalanchoes have very attractive and distinctive foliage, especially K. tomentosa (the "Panda Plant") with its fuzzy gray leaves edged in cinnamon-brown, K. orgyalis, with unusual felt-like brown leaves, K. marmorata (the "Pen-Wiper Plant") with blue leaves splotched with deep purple and unusual clear white flowers, K. longiflora var. coccinea with brilliant red leaves and yellow flowers, and K. thyrsiflora, whose powdery pale blue leaves edged in pink bear a superficial resemblance to a Cotyledon.

Noteworthy for its peculiar method of plant reproduction is K. suarezensis, which produces plantlets at the tips of its astonishingly-long leaves. This is a fortunate eccentricity since the plant dies down completely after producing its spectacular inflorescence. The elegant K. gastonis-bonnieri also forms plantlets at the tips of its powdery bluish-white leaves, which then curl up tightly to protect the young plants. For this reason, and because their flowers are pendant rather than erect, many authorities place these two plants in the section Bryophyllum. K. synsepala produces its young plants at the ends of four long runners, somewhat reminiscent of a strawberry plant.

I would like to propose an additional section (to be called perhaps "Les Miserables"?). to which I would assign such temperamental specimens as K. eriophylla, which is at first white, furry, and attractive, but sooner or later (usually sooner) languishes into extinction, K. rhombopilosa, whose leaves fall off if you so much as look at it cross-eyed (it is very little consolation that each leaf eventually takes root and begins to form a new plant - all you generally have is a pot-full of sprouting leaves!), K. nyikae, which has glossy, purplish leaves and is quite pretty until it blooms, at which point it dies completely, and K. teretifolia, a strikingly-bizarre plant with cylindrical recurved leaves, which seems to fall prey to every bug, virus, and fungus which comes along.

However - Most Kalanchoes are desirable and satisfying to grow for many reasons. In addition to their long-lasting winter flowers, beautiful foliage, and vigorous growth, most of them are very easy to propagate and cultivate. Many of them are extremely slow-growing (especially K. orgyalis, K. millottii, and K. tomentosa, which are also somewhat reluctant to bloom), so make ideal pot plants. Some of them even make good house plants (notably K. blossfeldiana and its many hybrids) if given sufficient light. Their cultural requirements are simple. They thrive in your usual well-drained succulent soil mix, and most species seem to prefer partial shade. However, full sun will give many of them better foliage and flower color - this is especially true of K. tomentosa, K. orgyalis, K. pumila, and K. longiflora var. coccinea. They also like more water than many other succulents, and some will tend to drop their leaves if left too dry for long. After blooming, many species become leggy and unattractive and should be cut back, after which new growth will usually sprout from the base of the plant. Propagation is easy from cuttings or leaves. The principal pests are aphids, which usually attack the flowers as soon as they appear. Almost all species are quite frost-tender, so year-'round outdoor cultivation is limited to the warmest parts of the country.

Literature consulted:

- Bleck, John: Kalanchoe (Cactus and Succulent Journal of America, March - April, 1973, pp. 59 - 62)
Brown, J.R. Succulents for the Amateur, pp. 104 - 110
Court, Doreen: Succulent Flora of Southern Africa, pp. 98 - 99

January 1984

Cactus-of-the-Month

Tephrocactus Lemaire

F. C. Thrombley

Tephrocactus (tēf-rō-kák-tūs)

Genus: Opuntia

Of all the sub-families of the cactaceae, the opuntioideae have the greatest range in terms of latitude, the natural habitat stretching from Canada in North America to Patagonia, Argentina in South America.

The sub-genus, Tephrocactus, of South America are the alpines of the Opuntia world. They range from Central Peru, on both sides of the Andes, crossing to the eastern Argentinean foothills and down as far as the table lands in Patagonia, a distance of approximately 4000 miles. They grow up to altitudes of 14000 feet through a great range of temperatures. In fact they survive in conditions quite remote from those generally accepted as characteristic for the family as a whole. In a Russian newspaper in March of 1969, a writer noted that some flowered and fruited after wintering under snow, with a minimum temperature down to minus 22 centigrade. Survival of intense heat and prolonged aridity is also recorded from many countries.

The name Tephrocactus is not inappropriate, although the new growth is a glossy color of various shades of primarily green, the mature stem segments are often of a dull, dead looking dirty brown or grey (ashy) color. Charles Lemaire named the plant from the Greek work, Tephra, which means ashes.

The flower colors range from white, various shades of yellow, pink, orange, red and at least one species has brown flowers. The seeds are circular and in at least one species the fruits have glochids inside. To germinate the seeds is quite a difficult task to say the least. In their natural surroundings the seeds of Tephrocactus undergo violent climatic changes from extreme cold to great heat. Further, when eaten by small animals they are excreted unchanged except that the hard outer coats have been softened by the digestive process. In the March 1979 issue of the National Cactus and Succulent Journal of Great Britian, E. W. Putnam wrote about the difficulties of germinating the seeds. He soaked them in water, froze them at 18 degrees celsuis, treated them with a dilute hydrochloric acid and rubbed them on sand paper before sowing. After 18 months he had not been successful. In the June 1979 issue he wrote an article in which Lois Glass, a well known linguist and cactophile, had in germinating Tephrocactus seed. Her own success came in the third year from sowing 20 seeds. Eighteen seedlings were produced after many iterations of watering, freezing, drying, etc.

The spines show great variety from ribbon-like papery spines to acicular or stoutly subulate. Alternatively the spines may be completely absent or only short and some are hair-like or bristle-like. Too, the spines do not have the sheaths that their North American relatives have.

Cultivation of this sub-genus is not very difficult. One should remember that they are plants from the high altitudes of the Andes and require excellent light conditions. They also are Opuntias, which in general require little water. In one area in Argentine near the super-dry area of Molinos, a town at the 8000 foot level, Tephrocactus molinensis and T. Wereri grow in abundance. I would suggest, therefore, that potted Tephrocactus be planted in a very well drained gritty soil.

For those who wish to grow Opuntias but do not have the space, Tephrocactus are excellent plants to raise. Most of them can be grown in small 4 to 5 inch half pots. They will withstand low temperatures if kept dry. The joints of many of these Tephrocactus are loosely attached and will break off if hit or jarred with a sharp bump. However, the joints are very easily rooted which enriches your collection. Truly a very rewarding plant to grow.

Reference used:

The Subgenus Tephrocactus

by Gilbert Leighton-Boyce & James Iliff

Published by The Succulent Plant Trust, England

NEWS NEWS NEWS

Congratulations to Verna Pasek for being elected to the Board of Directors at our December meeting.

Also notice the changes of committee responsibility on the back pages. We appreciate all those willing to help.

SORRY - But noone has come forward to head the refreshment committee - So there will be no furnished refreshments this month.

DUES ARE DUE -

Please don't forget that dues are due. Please send or give your personalized check to Warren Buckner.

Notice from a Member

For Sale, Outstanding collection of cacti and succulent books; 'The Stapelieae, 'White/Sloan, 3 Vol. Mint Condition. \$300.00 Call or write for complete listing. Augie, 5163 E. Bedford Dr. S D, 92116, 619- 280-4444.

SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

OFFICERS

President - Frank Thrombly	
16333 Roca Drive, San Diego 92128	487-5544
1st Vice President - Dr. Leroy Phelps	
4094 - 36th Street, San Diego 92104	280-9690
2nd Vice President - John Pasek	
10283 Covina Place, San Diego 92126	271-0515
Recording Secretary - Susan Clements	
42251 Sixth Street, Temecula 92390	676-6126
Treasurer - Warren Buckner	
1744 Englewood Drive, Lemon Grove 92045	469-1391
Corresponding Secretary - Robert Kent	
16206 Rostrata Hill, Poway 92064	485-6104
Immediate Past President - Rick Latimer	
5990 Lake Murray Blvd., La Mesa 92041	697-4100

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dorothy Dunn, Phyllis Flechsig, Madelyn Lee
Joe Clements, Bud Aubuchon, Verna Pasek

COMMITTEES

Activities: Martin Mooney
Audit: James Berry
Conservation: Dr. Ronald Monroe
Education: Cacti - Frank Thrombly and Dorothy Dunn
Succulents - Rick Latimer and Dorothy Dunn
Exhibits: Bragging Table - Phyllis Flechsig
Historian: Rick Latimer
Library: Jack Schlotte
Membership: Warren Buckner
Open House: Frank Thrombly
Plant Exchange Table: John Roth and Anthony D'Attilio
Plants & Supplies Table: John & Verna Pasek and Gerald & Eleanor Dice
Publication: Mary Aubuchon - 427-3388
Reception: Perlo Lewis and Ethel Standish
Regalement:
Representative:
Balboa Park Desert Garden - John Pasek
Quail Botanical Garden - Phyllis Flechsig
S.D. Botanical Garden Foundation - Elizabeth Glover
S.D. Floral Association - Verna Pasek
Liaison & Publicity: Robert Kent
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.

Editor
Mary Aubuchon
1058 5th Avenue
Chula Vista, CA 92011



FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS