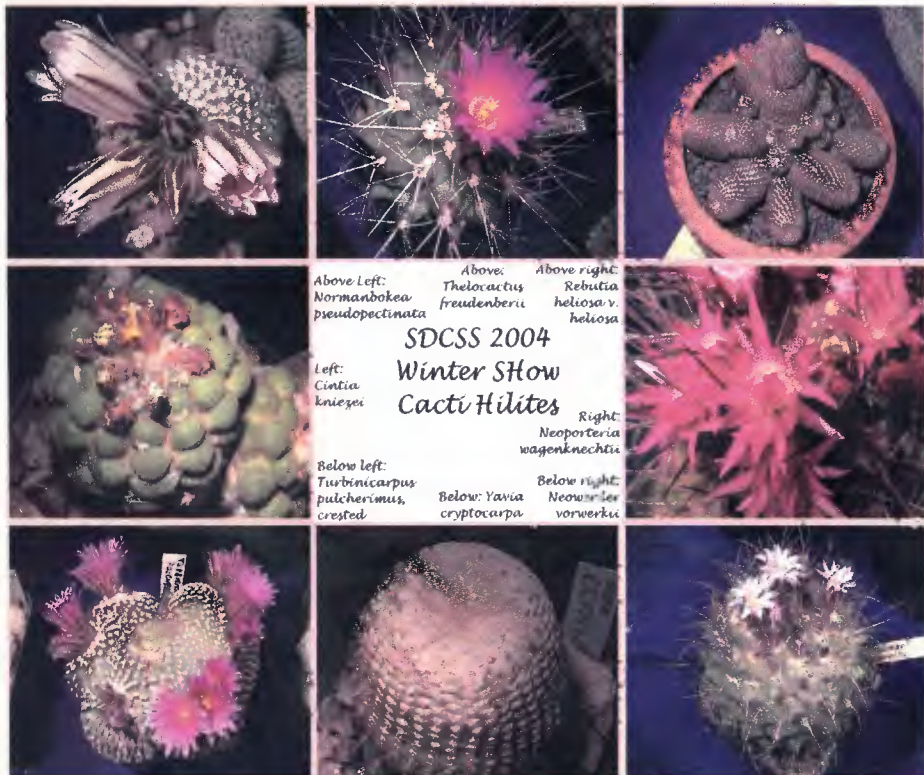


ESPINAS Y FLORES



Above Left:
Normanbokea
pseudoplectinata

Above:
Thelocactus
freudenberii

Above right:
Rebutia
heliosa v.
heliosa

Left:
Cintia
kniezei

SDCSS 2004
Winter Show
Cacti Hilites

Right:
Neoporteria
wagenknechtii

Below left:
Turbinicarpus
pulcherimus,
crested

Below: Yavia
cryptocarpa

Below right:
Neowerberia
vorwerkii

Photo credit: Tim Normer

**Because of a cancellation no details are available
on this Months Program at the time of publication**

**Combined Cactus & Succulent Plant of the Month
FLOWERS THAT BLOOM IN THE SPRING
by Andrew Wilson**

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

**Volume 39 Number 3
Saturday March 13th 2004**

1:00 PM

Room 101 Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park

Presidents Message

February 21, 2004

It is Saturday afternoon and I am sitting here watching the rain come down - what a welcome sight - and thinking back on our Winter Show and Sale last weekend. What a great day it was - great crowds, beautiful Show, lots of vendors with so many fantastic plants, and an amazing group of volunteers who made the day a great success. Whether it was the Valentine effect, the rain shower, moving the event to February, or the wonderful job done by our publicity chair (go Tom!), we smashed all records for sales at this event. Though several members who usually contribute so much to this show were absent - attending Joey Betzler's wedding (congratulations Joey!), the participation of several new members filled in the gaps. Again, our crack cashiering team worked very hard to keep up with the lines - many thanks to Tom Birt, Joe Kraatz, Anthony McFarland, Michelle Heckathorn, Spencer Maze, Kirsten Wilkes, Jeff Harris, and Chris Miller - you folks did a great job. Special thanks to Susan Hopkins and Mr. Ed who stood guard all day at the show making sure no show plants left the area. Thanks also to Phil Kent and Allen Clark for being a great help in the kitchen and every where else they were needed. I am sure I have missed some volunteers - but please know that you are all greatly appreciated. We also appreciate all the vendors who come from near and far to offer such a great selection of plants and pots. The plants brought by vendors and other members to show, as

well as the wonderful photography (good job Chris) made a beautiful display and an educational exhibit. GREAT JOB EVERYONE!

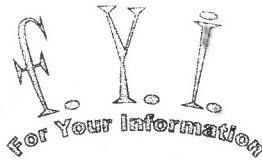
We will be participating in Earth Fair 2004 on April 25th in Balboa Park. We need a few vendors to participate and some volunteers to come by and spend an hour or two talking to people about plants and our Society. Please call or e-mail me if you are able to participate.

We are planning a bus trip - so mark your calendars for July 3rd - we will be going to the Huntington for the CSSA Show and Sale - details to follow as the date draws closer.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

There are a couple of areas where we need some people to contribute to the vitality of our organization. First we need an individual who comes to meetings and is able to interface with our webmaster, to be responsible for gathering information and making sure it gets to our website. The other need is writing articles for the newsletter and presenting a Cactus/Succulent of the Month. PLEASE CONTACT JEFF HARRIS - 691-294-5708. DO IT TODAY! Hope to see you all on March 13th.

Pam Badger
pambadge@earthlink.net



Joey Betzler is Married. *Wendy S. Whitaker will be changing her Name to Wendy S. Betzler! We exchanged vows on Valentine's Day. Tom Knapik was a groomsman, up in front with us. The Best Man, Jack Peters introduced us in the spring of 1998 at Font's Point.*

I lost David on January 10 (David Roberts) We both missed coming to the meetings, but David's pulmonary fibrosis kept us from traveling that distance the past few years.

Kathe H. Roberts

**California Legacy of A.R. Valentien
December 12 2003 - September 7 2004**

This exhibition is a display of 80 stunning watercolors of native California plants painted in the early 1900s. In addition to the lifelike paintings, the exhibition will include examples of Valentien's Rookwood pottery, landscapes in oil, historical photographs, and personal artifacts. After its debut in San Diego, the exhibition will tour to museums and gardens across the United States. It is produced by the San Diego Natural History Museum with generous funding from Eleanor and Jerry Navarra; accompanied by the book, *Plant Portraits: The California Legacy of A.R. Valentien*, produced by the Irvine Museum.

The Valentien watercolor collection has been a treasured part of the Museum's holdings since 1933, when they were donated to the Museum Library from Miss Scripps' estate. "It is hard to overestimate the excitement that this project represents for the San Diego Natural History Museum. Through all these years, the collection has been seen by only a few fortunate people, who longed to share the breathtaking freshness and liveliness of these 'plant portraits,' as Mr. Valentien called them, with the public," said Dr. Michael Hager, executive director of the Museum.

Almost 100 years ago, the artist Albert Valentien began a project that was ten years in the execution. He began his work in 1908, when he was commissioned by Ellen Browning Scripps to paint the wildflowers of California, and the plan was to publish a book of the paintings when he finished. However, in the end Miss Scripps decided the cost was too prohibitive and Valentien's hope of seeing his work reproduced and admired by a large audience was dashed. In 2000, thanks to the commitment and wonderful generosity of Eleanor and Jerome Navarra, the Valentien Project, which would entail photographing, conserving, cataloging, and eventually exhibiting the collection, began.

Flowers that bloom in the Spring

By Andrew Wilson

One of the joys of living in San Diego is the ability to grow succulents (cacti included) that flower in winter and spring. It is mid-February as I write and flowers are blazing color from benches and planted mounds. Some began at Christmas. On the non-cactus side I count *Mesembs* (*Cheiridopsis*, *Antimima*, *Aloinopsis* and others), *Pelargoniums*, *Gasterias*, *Aloes* and *Crassulas* and *othonnas* while among the cacti I see *Neoporterias* (*Eriosyce*), *Matucanas*, *Rebutias* and *Mammillarias*. There is nothing unusual about all this; we are lucky to live here.

Why can we do this? There are two reasons. The first is that many succulents that flower during the cool season come from climates of the world that are similar to ours. Among succulent plants, cool-season growers come from the drier edges of Mediterranean climates of the world, such as we have here in San Diego. From the northwestern coast of Africa we get *Aeoniums* and *Euphorbias*. From the western coast of southern Africa we get *Mesembs*, *Pelargoniums*, *Crassulas*, *Avonias*, *Tylecodons*, *Euphorbias*, *Othonnas*,

Aloes and others. From the west coast of South America we get *Neoporterias* (or *Eriosyce*), *Copiapoas* and *Milas*. From northwestern Baja we get *Mammillarias* and *Ferocactus*. The second reason is that we can also grow plants to flower in the cool season even though they are not strictly cool-season growers. For instance, while inhabiting regions close to or within the tropics the aloes of the dry southern portion of Madagascar and some cacti from the drier portions of the Andes respond well to our conditions.

I have selected two plant genera to illustrate both of these reasons, *Othonnas* and *Matucanas*. The choice was also made for a more practical reason - we have not discussed them here before. The *Othonnas* come from the coastally influenced regions of the Western Cape of South Africa. These areas have the type of dry Mediterranean climate just described. In contrast, *Matucanas* are found in the Andes of Peru, a region that is closer to the equator. However, on account of altitude and the effects of mountain rain-shadows these cacti appear to be able to accept our condi-

tions very well. Completely different in other ways, *Othonnas* and *Matucanas* both experience an extended dry season, receive moisture in the form of fog and flower, or start their flowering season, in winter and spring.

Othonna

The *Othonna* genus, named after an ancient Greek word, is a member of the daisy family *Asteraceae*. It occurs only in southern Africa and, like everything else in the numbers for the daisy family, it is large, containing well over a hundred species. Many of these are dwarf succulent plants and occur in the cool season rainfall areas of South Africa and, further north in Namibia. The semi-succulent species (herbaceous or bulbous) lie outside this discussion. The genus has been recognized from back to the days of Linnaeus, well over two hundred years ago, and it has not undergone name changes even though more and more species are still being added to it following new discoveries.

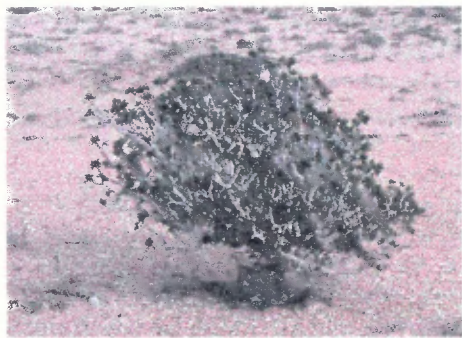


Othonna arborescens in habitat

Othonnas are very diverse in form. They may be succulent shrubs with fleshy stems and leaves; they may have tuberous roots or they may be caudiciform plants. Leaves are mostly succulent also but these fall off during the dry season. The shrubby types may range from a few inches (say 10 cm) above the ground to about six feet (2 m) tall. Many of them are dwarf plants, growing in rocky places. On account of this many are not only delightful plants to grow in containers, they are excellent subjects for bonsai-like cultivation.

Among the large number of species we must refer to the "treelike" species, *O. arborescens*. Under moist, mountaintop conditions in the Richtersveld it may grow to nearly six feet (2 m) in height but is generally much smaller, both in nature as well as in cultivation. Others, such as *O. clavifolia* with gray-blue succulent leaves like small grapes, grow only close to the coast and survive on coastal mists. Some of the dwarf species that form natural bonsai specimens are *O. retrorsa*, *O. euphorbioides* and *O. furcata*, *O. herrei* and *O. arbuscula*.

Succulent *Othonnas* possess a peculiar charm. I can still recall a specimen of *O. protecta*, mature but no taller than eight inches, standing alone with nothing but a few quartz chips at its base and miles of red sand in all directions on the bleak plains of the Richtersveld. These plants are survivors, but still look good while surviving.



Othonna furcata on coastal sands near Port Nolloth

With a few exceptions, they are not very difficult to grow as potted specimens. Nevertheless, it takes time to produce the cragged specimens that Rudy Lime grows - do bring one Rudy! A fast-draining mix containing materials such as pumice, chicken grit, very coarse sand and DG is all they need. Constituents such as peat moss are unnecessary, and perhaps inadvisable. As days shorten and nights become cooler in late September or early October you can start to water them. Some will bloom right away; this is what happens in the Richtersveld if a warm autumn storm should drop rain on them. Most will bloom in winter or early spring, depending on moisture and temperature. During the growing season, from September or October through April, the plants enjoy sunshine. Some people say that a few species such as *O. armiana* or *O. herrei* are better if given morning sun only but full sun is the normal preference. Never give any water as soon as the leaves start to

turn brown and fall off in the late spring. In nature they may be protected during summer by rocks at their base and their roots may go deep to avoid excessive heating. In cultivation, you may bury the pots or, more simply, place the plants in dry shade during the summer months. In San Diego, you can grow some of them in the ground provided they are grown in very fast-draining conditions such as raised beds. There are a few, such as *O. clavifolia* where even this may be a risky proposition.

Propagation can be done from cuttings taken in fall. Seed propagation is more interesting. They do set seed, plenty of it, but the percentage of fertile seed is sometimes not high. I have heard stories, probably apocryphal, about plants not being self-fertile. In any event the seed should be sown as soon as it is ripe. The germination time is from one to three weeks. The seedlings grow quickly and many species reach flowering size in two years.

New species are still being discovered, as articles in the Cactus and Succulent Journal during the past few years attest. When I once asked Graham Williamson for the identity of an *Othonna* specimen we once saw on a trip he said he could not identify it but could assure me it was probably new. There are more out there yet to be found. Happy hunting!

Matucana

These plants were first placed in the *Echinocactus* genus but Britton and Rose separated them, assigning them the name after a Peruvian village in the Andes. There are seventeen species currently recognized. Without getting into botanical details these cacti are easily recognized by their long-necked flowers, mostly red or orange. Both the color and flower shape are attractive to hummingbirds that pollinate them. The plants are usually low growing, sometimes solitary and sometimes forming mounds. In nature some species may grow taller, up to 20 inches (50 cm).

Even though they occur within the tropics they undergo distinct seasonal changes. The cool season is dry, with sunny days and cool (or cold) clear nights. The warm season is not really much warmer but it is more humid. *Matucana*, at about 2400 m (7000 feet) has a rainfall of 260 mm (about 10.5 inches), all of it coming between October and March. These conditions are nearly identical to those for San Diego! Cajamarca, at nearly 9000 feet (2800 m), is the center for many of the *Matucana* species. Its rainfall is over twice as high but the dry season occurs at the same time. The average maximum temperatures are near 70F (21C) year round but the nighttime temperatures are cool, 44F (6C) in the wet season and falling to 38F (3C) in the dry season (from April to October). So, it is not surprising that following clear sunny days in

winter the plants should start to bloom. Cool nights are not the problem but cold nights may be for a few species.

Of course, with nearly twenty species there is quite a lot of variation in requirements. *M. madisonorum* and *M. formosa* grow at relatively low altitudes (below 2200 feet or 700 m) and will not accept any frost but *M. haynei* may be found at over 13,000 feet (4000m) and experience frequent freezing. In their book "A Cactus Odyssey", Mauseth, Kiesling and Ostolaza describe *M. haynei* ssp. *hystrix* growing in snow. It is also interesting that at the lower altitudes matucanas such as *M. madisonorum* lose their spines as they mature while, at high altitudes, they retain them.



Matucana haynei 'grandiflora' in cultivation

Of the species grown *M. aureiflora* is probably the best known. Unlike most of the others its flowers are bright yellow and, interestingly the corolla tube is

short. So, perhaps it has a different pollinator. After its springtime show, like the other species it will produce blooms sporadically all summer and into fall. It develops a flattened, globose shape as it grows to maturity. *M. aurantiaca* is also globose when young but eventually produces stems up to a foot tall. Its flowers are orange-red and tinged with purple at the edges, giving it a dramatic appearance. *M. tuberculata* also shows violet tingeing of its long, curved orange-red flowers.

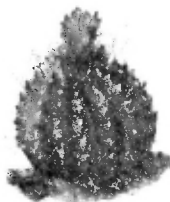
While many of the *Matucanas* can take considerable cold they would not be suitable subjects for planting out. Damp cold such as we get, differs from the dry cold they receive in their cool season. As potted subjects, protected only from rain by the use of plastic sheeting as a patio cover and watered lightly until growth begins in January or early February, they present no special difficulties in cultivation. Besides, their flowers can then be enjoyed up close. Expect humming-birds to find them. High temperatures far inland may lead to burning of the skin in summer unless they are given light shade. Closer to the coast this does not seem to be necessary. Species coming from low altitudes, *M. madisonorum* and *M. formosa* can tolerate high temperatures without difficulty while those from higher altitudes including *M. haynei*, *M. ritteri* or *M. oreodoxa* prefer a little more shade under such conditions. A detailed listing of altitude categories is provided in "The

Genus *Matucana*" by R. Bregman (available in our library) is useful if you live in a hotter area or if you get frost each year.

Propagation by seed presents no great difficulties. Sowing on a non-organic mix of sand and decomposed granite works well and avoids the problems of damping off provided they are also given open ventilation and light. Care during the first year to maintain warmth does seem to reduce losses and certainly speeds them through the stages of infancy.

Summary

Our San Diego conditions are suited naturally to the "wet" cool-season succulents from dry mediterranean climate regions of the world and, by protecting plants from wintertime rain we can also accommodate the "dry" cool-season succulent plants. *Othonnas* and *Matucanas* illustrate these two types. Both come into flower during the cool months of the year, especially during the spring. If you've not tried them already, start now!



POTTERY ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Joe, Wujcik, a Southern California potter who specializes in hand thrown and decorated pottery for growing and showing plants, is celebrating a major milestone as a craftsman. He has been creating useful, decorative pottery for the past 1/3 of a century.

Joe began studying his craft in 1971 under the instruction of Frank Susi, a master potter from Kent State University in Ohio. Joe has exhibited widely including in Florida, throughout the Midwest states, and across the Southwest. Currently, his work is found at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix and at most major Southern California area cactus and succulent shows held throughout the year.

Joe still finds making pottery a challenge but it is one he enjoys meeting each day. "I look forward to creating useful pottery that supports and emphasizes the special appeal found in cactus and succulent plants. It is exciting to develop a new shape, glaze, or decoration that enables the plant grower to further communicate this appeal."

As a kickoff to this anniversary celebration, Joe will join two other leading potters in a spring sale. This sale will be held at the Cactus Data Plants nursery on Saturday, March 27, 2004 from 9 to 5. Joining Joe will be:

- Don Hunt - a San Diego area potter who specializes in wheel thrown exotic shapes with very beautiful and colorful glazes, and
- Mark Muradian - a Fresno area potter who creates hand built iron washed pots with engraved, rustic patterns. And of course, Cactus Data Plants' greenhouses will be full of new plants to purchase and enjoy.

Join us for this anniversary celebration. Cactus Data Plants is located at 9607 E Ave S-12, Littlerock, CA 93543. For directions call: (661) 944-2784.

Joe can be reached at (714) 963-3146 or at *Cactusvalleypots.com*



Bursaria fagaroides

CACTUS and SUCCULENT SHOW and SALE

SAT. & SUN. APRIL 10 & 11, 2004, 9am to 4pm
SOUTH COAST BOTANICAL GARDENS
26300 CRENSHAW BLVD. PALOS VERDES PENINSULA

SEE outstanding displays by selected growers!

VOTE for the best!

ASK experts how they grow their plants!

BUY plants from top growers!

For more information contact Dick Hulett at 310-832-2262 (E-mail petplants@sbcglobal.net);

Carol Causey at 310-675-5843; Jim Hanna at 562-920-3046 or aloccat1@aol.com.

DIRECTIONS: From I 10, take 405 south to Crenshaw, go south on Crenshaw take 110 south to Pacific Coast Hwy., go west to Crenshaw and turn left.

**A SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
PRESENTATION**



Cylindropuntia densiflorum N. Johnston

Upcoming Events

2004

March 27 - 29 Colorado C&SS Show and Sale, Denver Botanic Gardens, 1005 York Street. Contact Helen Norton, 970-353-9581 or e-mail at Rips-mom@aol.com

April 10 & 11, 9am to 4pm, South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Show and Sale. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd. Palos Verdes Peninsula. For more information contact Dick Hulett at 310-832-2262 (E-mail petplants@sbcglobal.net); Carol Causey at 310-675-5843; Jim Hanna at 562-920-3046 or aloecats1@aol.com.

April 9 - 12: Australasian Cactus Convention, Quality Hotel, Steeple Conference Centre, Fitzherbert Ave, Palmerston North, New Zealand. Hosted by Manawatu and Tararua Branches. This event will incorporate the AGM of the C&SS of NZ. Air New Zealand, Origin Pacific or Freedom Air can fly you into Milson Airport. Registrants who make prior arrangements can be met on arrival. Keynote speakers included Paul Forster (paulforster@uq.net.au) on Succulents of South Africa Cape Provinces and Haworthia; Rudolf Schultz (copiapoa@iaccess.com.au) on some of his South American experiences in "Out of Brazil" and about "Succulents of the Canary Islands;" and Attila Kapitany (gecko@connexus.net.au) will present his research on "Succulents in the Garden" and will talk about his experiences in Argentina. More info from Frances Verrity at verrity@actrix.gen.nz Updated info at: www.cactus2004.freesevers.com/

April 17: CSSA Board Meeting 9am at Scottsdale Plaza Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona (site of 2005 Convention)

May 1 - 2: Houston C&SS Spring Sale at the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Dr, Houston TX Open from 10am to 5pm each day. Rare and unusual Cacti and Succulents for sale. Contact Hank Andresen for more details. Tel: 713-436-1734 or e-mail Hank at hand1609@hotmail.com

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. Contact Dick Wiedhopf at wiedhopf@pharmacy.arizona.edu

June 5 Celebrate Lotusland's new cactus garden, featuring the spectacular Dunlap Collection. Enjoy wine, hors d'oeuvres, and informative tours of this dramatic new venue. For information, call 805-969-3767, ext. 107

June 11 - 13: Mid-West C&S Conference Co-hosted by River City C&SS of Omaha, Nebraska, and Mid-Iowa C&SS of Des Moines, Iowa, at the Travel Lodge, Council Bluffs, Iowa. For conference registration information, please contact Connie Staples, 3417 Bel Aire Rd, Des Moines Iowa 50310. Tel: 515-255-1734 or e-mail her at cfstaples@aol.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. Set-up on Thursday, Show open Friday and Saturday.

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