

Espinas y Flores

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

Vol. XII, No. 11.

November, 1977.

November Meeting Date:

Saturday, November 12th, 1977
at 1:30 P.M.

CACTUS OF THE MONTH:

Mammillaria.

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH:

Pelargoniums.

PROGRAM:

"ALOES, CULTIVATED AND WILD"

By: Dave Verity.

Dave Verity will speak on "Aloes, Cultivated and Wild", accompanied by his slides of the plants he photographed in Africa, and those grown here. Mr. Verity is Chief Garden Botanist at the University of California Botanical Gardens at U.C.L.A.

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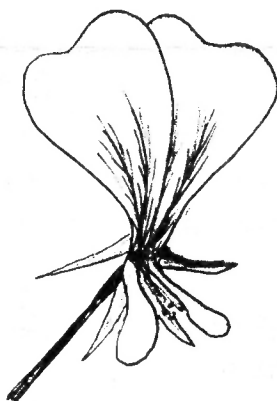
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SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH

Pelargoniums

Rick Latimer

The order of dicotyledonous flowering plants known as Geraniales consists of several important plant families. Included are: last month's star Euphorbiaceae, Berseraceae (Frankincense and Myrrh), Rutaceae (Rue or Citrus Family), Tropaeolaceae (Nasturtiums), and others. However, the most important family to us this month (and to many people all months) is the order's namesake Geraniaceae. This, the Geranium Family, consists mostly of herbs widely distributed in temperate and subtropical regions. The leaves are lobed or compound and arranged alternately on the stem. The bisexual flower has five sepals, five petals, and five or ten stamens. The chief characteristic that distinguishes members of this family from others is the long-beaked fruit which gives it the name of 'Cranesbill' from the Greek word geranos. The most important genus in this family is Pelargonium from another Greek word pelargos meaning stork. So we have two different words being equally descriptive. The commonly cultivated "geraniums" belong to this genus. The genus Geranium contains closely related but lesser known or grown plants. The common geranium related weed with the small pale purple flower is Erodium cicutarium. The only other important genus is Sarcocaulon.



P. tetragonum

The distinctive feature of the genus Pelargonium from other genera of the Geraniaceae is a nectar bearing tube. Pelargoniums come from the Atlantic island of St. Helena (*P. cotyledonis*), Australia, Madagascar, Asia Minor, and East Africa; but nine-tenths of the species come from South Africa. Pelargonium flowers are clustering and irregular, where Sarcocaulon flowers are singular and regular. Both of these (the succulents) genera are winter active and summer dormant.

Most Pelargonium are not succulent such as the common *P. peltatum* ground cover and the night fragrant, green-flowered *P. gibbosum*, although they are drought hardy (relatively speaking). *P. domesticum* (Martha Washingtons) almost is a succulent in my opinion. Some of the succulent Pelargoniums are too new to be in books. Perhaps there are some undiscovered ones.

P. tetragonum-(sub-genus Jenkinsonia) This one is definitely succulent. The green stems have four angles that alternate in each segment (45°). These segments zig-zag with the deciduous leaf alternating on the outside angle. The flowers have only four petals, pale lavender with dark purple veins.

p. echinatum-(sub-genus Cortusina) I do not consider this one to be a succulent although it is xerophytic. It has glaucous stems and leaves (deciduous, mine popped up on

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the first of this month. The leaves leave persistent spiny stipules rather like *Kalanchoe beharensis*. The flowers are supposed to be white, pink, or purple. Mine has never bloomed. This plant makes a good bonsai.

P. carnosum-(sub-genus *Otidia*) This one has leaves like parsley. I have seen beautiful bonsais of it. The flowers should be white.

P. spinosum-(sub-genus *Glaucophyllum*) This one seems to answer the description of a plant that I once saw at the San Diego Geranium Society Show some years back. The old petioles and the persistent stipules harden into spines.

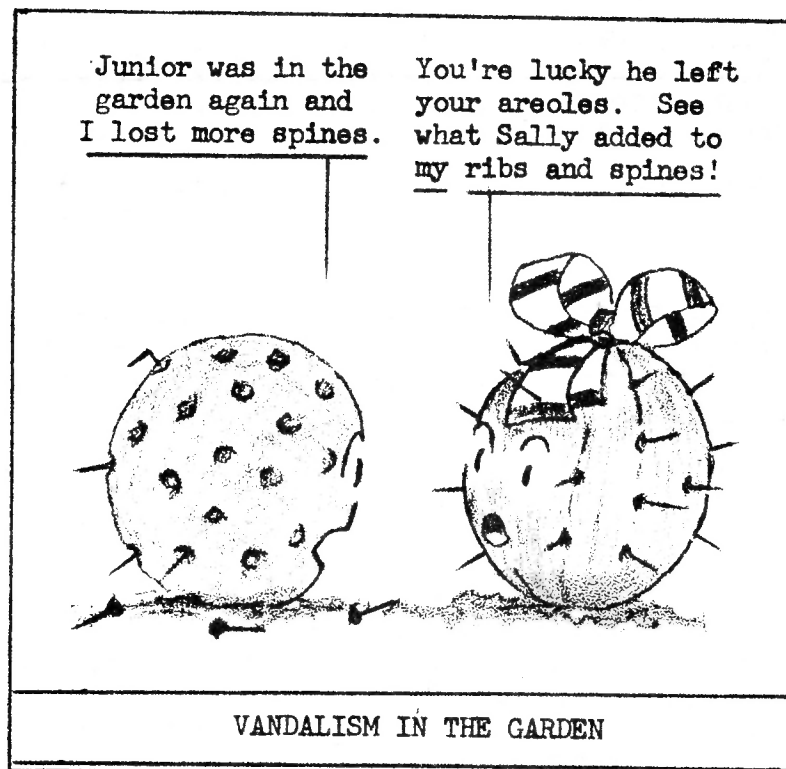
P. rutaceum-Everyone should remember this plant brought in by Wilna Johnson in September. It has a tuberous root, fuzzy, light-green leaves, and yellow and black flowers!

References

Clifford, Derek, Pelargoniums, 1970, pp. 30-31, 217-219, 234-238, 243-245.

Lawrence, Taxonomy of Vascular Plants, pp. 549-566.

Novak, F. A., The Pictorial Encyclopedia of Plants and Flowers, pp. 325-326.



JOINT MEETING:

Our joint meeting, with Palomar C. & S.S., last month provided an exceptionally large crowd of enthusiastic members, who appeared thoroughly to enjoy our varied program, packed with interest for all. The one sad note in the proceedings was the absence of our dear friend and dedicated member, Dr. George Radwin. How George would have enjoyed the beautiful slides and humorous lecture of Clive Innes, could he have been with us!

REGALEMENT:

The refreshment tables were even more sumptuous than usual, and, needless to say, were greatly appreciated by everyone. The good things to eat were, of course, provided by both Palomar and San Diego Societies:

May Andrews and Committee presided for San Diego
Jeanette Waterhouse and Committee presided for Palomar

The members concerned are to be warmly congratulated for their efforts on our behalf. I regret that I was not provided with individual names, due to the large numbers involved, no doubt.

PLANT SALES:

The following people gave the Treasurer 25% of their gross sales at the October meeting:

Phillip Favalle & Mr. Knerr	\$18.00
Wilma Johnson	\$ 6.50
Ruth Stanton	\$ 1.25
Rhoda Radwin	\$99.25

Thank you very much.

(Sgd.) Russel E. Evans,
Treasurer.

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Owing to rising costs, our membership fee, in future, will be \$6.00 per family. Membership dues may be mailed to the Treasurer, or will be accepted by him at any meeting, except during the Christmas Party Meeting in December.

DR. RADWIN'S PLANTS:

The Club has purchased \$150.00 worth of Dr. George Radwin's plants for distribution to members at the December meeting.

SPECIAL NOTE

Dr. Ronald Monroe, who will be writing our Cactus of the Month articles in future, was unable to write about Mammillarias this month owing to sickness. The article on page 7 of this issue is a reprint of that written by Dr. George Radwin, and previously appeared in "EyF", November, 1974.

IT'S FALL AGAIN AT "CASITA ESPINA
Y FLORES".

Audrey Johnson

Up in the hills, the "weird weather year" continues, although I must admit that it has proved quite an interesting experience to see how my various plant types have responded to the unusual conditions.

For instance.....

Our snowy river of trailing African daisies, which "flows" down the side of our steep driveway, has failed us sadly this year. As a matter of fact, we have several suspiciously brown areas throughout its length, which we may have to replant. We plan to think about this later.

Roses - this Summer was one of our worst for blooms, although a short time ago we did have a brief revival, and then, back to the dry heat and very few roses again. Surprisingly enough, the only roses blooming at present are those grown under the most exposed conditions. One rambler, which sits on a particularly windy and very sunny corner of the house, has done nobly throughout the entire Summer, and still has a sprinkling of buds. Also, down on the sloping banks of our small field (where we usually put failing rose bushes for a sort of final resting place!) the bushes have continued to grow, flourish and bloom all Summer, with only a very little assistance from the sprinklers.

My old favourite - Senecio Angulatus - has absolutely excelled itself this year, and is, at the moment, a mass of gold on the hillside. Taking advantage of this prolific growth and blooming, I have made a few further discoveries about this rather neglected, but extremely robust, plant. The flowers, which are pretty and plentiful, have a very pleasant fragrance. As I sat at breakfast this morning, I enjoyed again my view of the bright yellow flowers cascading down the hill to the patio, and went out to take a closer look. Yes, I was right! As the sun reached the flowering areas, I could see the great activity of a myriad insects milling about in every direction. Bees there were by the thousand, of course (I wonder what S. Angulatus honey would taste like?), but what I was particularly thrilled to notice was the great variety of butterflies which hovered over the flowers - not just the little yellow butterflies, but bigger and more colourful ones too! Since I am particularly fond of butterflies, this, for me, was another point in favour of S. Angulatus. Apparently my favourite vine and ground-cover just loves heat and dryness, and thrives on it - in S. California, who can ask for anything more? (Even our ice-plant needs the help of the sprinklers!)

Regarding our naturalized area of cacti and succulents on the upper hillside, which take care of themselves, all have done remarkably well this year. I was sorry not to be able to bring along our euphorbia tree last month - it flourishes among the rocks just above the house, -but since it weighs about a ton and we wouldn't disturb it for the world, I was unable to do so. If I can obtain a good photograph, I will bring it along to the meeting. That will surely be the Johnsons' bragging plant of the month!

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Some of my stapeliads, also, thrive amidst the boulders up in this area, and they, too, seem to have enjoyed the heat and dryness of the past Summer. One morning last week I scanned the rocks for the latest "developments" and was surprised to observe, on a clump, no less than six enormous "buds" trying to open, with scarcely room for each one to do itself justice.

Our large selection of local dudleyas have looked miserable all Summer, but already they are plumping up, and will soon be back to their former beauty, I have no doubt. Also, our collection of local ferocactus has flourished, and each plant has a crown of plump seed pods. Altogether, it hasn't been at all a bad year for those plants, which take care of themselves, up aloft!

And now as I sit writing this by my little decorative pool and fountain, I am enjoying some of my favourite fuschias, which are again coming into bloom under the lathhouse, and the graceful strands of *S. Angulatus*, which hang down over the high boulders at the back of the pool. (I had been wondering what hanging plant to place up there and how to grow it - now I know!) Tonight Geoff and I are going to collect some goldfish to put in the pool, and some water hyacinths to float on the surface. Another Johnson family project completed!

QUAIL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Audrey Johnson

The following is an excerpt from one of the batch of letters which I shall be sending out to the local news media ten days or so before our Christmas Bazaar, on December 4th:-

"Occasion: "Christmas in Flowerland" Bazaar.
Time: 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.
Date: Sunday, the 4th December, 1977.
Place: The Ecke Family Building,
Quail Botanical Gardens,
230 Quail Gardens Drive,
Encinitas, Ca.

In addition to Mr. Ecke's very special poinsettias, which are always a great attraction, we will have our usual profusion of beautiful plants on sale, suitable both for home and garden. Enjoy, also, your Christmas shopping by touring our fascinating Boutique, Gourmet and Christmas Booth sections, where are to be found a variety of hand-crafted items too numerous to mention, and a great many of our home-made "goodies" for your enjoyment.

A pause for refreshment at the Kitchen Window will not disappoint you. Among the many delicious eating treats, be sure to discover, and enjoy, our well-known herb and flower sandwiches, which are always a great favourite with everyone.

To round off this exciting day in the true Christmas spirit, don't miss a stroll through the Gardens, which are just as enchanting at Christmas-time as they are at any other time of the year!"

I would like, here, to remind those members who are donating plants for our sale to bring them along on the Thursday, or, at the latest, the Friday, before the 4th December, as all plants have to be inspected early on Saturday morning.

Do come and join in the fun on Sunday, December 4th - we'll look forward to seeing you there!

CACTUS OF THE MONTH
MAMMILLARIA

Dr. George E. Radwin
November 1974.

Every cactus fancier knows the genus Mammillaria, and unless he is infected with "cactophilia" in the southwestern United States, with its barrel cacti, chollas and saguaros, the first plants he is able to acquire are usually members of the large and diverse genus Mammillaria, so named by reason of its multitude of small to large nipple-like tubercles.

Mammillaria is by far the largest cactus genus in terms of number of species. Although Britton and Rose treated only 150 species in the early 20's, today there are more than 300 species known, the precise number depends on how carefully one defines the species.....splitters vs. lumpers again. (Backeberg lists 367 species.)

The magnitude of the group and the need to better understand interspecific relationships has led to the assignment of each species to one of ten "series" or "species" groups. In so doing species with several characteristics in common can be grouped without recourse to forming new, full-fledged generic names. Other less cautious workers have introduced several subgenera whose validity depends on the person to whom one speaks. Among these are Dolicothele (including Mammillaria baumii, M. surculosa), Phellosperma (including Mammillaria macrancistra*), and Krainzia (Mammillaria longiflora) * "micran" ?

In form, Mammillaria may be globular to cylindrical, and may be either caespitose (offset-forming) or non-caespitose. Spines may be either hooked or unhooked (straight) and arise from areoles at the tips of the tubercles. Blooms are axillary, arising from between the tubercles. Blooms may range in color from uniform bright red through violets and pinks into cream with red, pink or yellow longitudinal stripes. Others have white, cream or yellow blooms. Blooms range in size from tiny to some of the (proportionately) largest in the Cactaceae (e.g. M. goldii and M. theresae). When blooms wither they are either retracted into the plant body, or they dry and drop off. After a variable period of time, the fruit protrudes from the plant body. This fruit is generally sausage-shaped, and may range in color from bright red or orange to yellowish or white.

One group of Mammillarias is characterized by producing a white, sticky substance, commonly called "latex" that is produced at wound sites. The other group does not produce this substance.

Culturally, Mammillarias are too diverse to generalize about. Many may be grown successfully out of doors in San Diego, but few are frost resistant. Their greatest weakness appears to be their intolerance of excessive moisture in cool weather.

The distribution of Mammillaria species includes the southwestern U.S. (Calif., Ariz., N.M., Texas) through Mexico, which is the homeland of the vast majority of species. A few are known from Central America. One species comes from the Caribbean Islands (M. nivosa), and one from South America (M. columbiana).

Some of the more commonly available Mammillaria species are:

<u>M. bocasana</u>	<u>M. dioica</u>	<u>M. hahniana</u>	<u>M. nivosa</u>
<u>M. camptotricha</u>	<u>M. dolichocentra</u>	<u>M. melanocentra</u>	<u>M. parkinsonii</u>
<u>M. candida</u>	<u>M. elongata</u>	<u>M. microholia</u>	<u>M. rhodantha</u>
<u>M. compressa</u>	<u>M. fragilis</u>	<u>M. neopotosina</u>	<u>M. spinosissima</u>
<u>M. dealbata</u>	<u>M. geminispina</u>		

A TRIP TO REMEMBER!

Ione Hubner

Saturday, September 24th, was really a gala event - what a caravan! The members started assembling at the organ parking lot well before 7:00 A.M., and the 'bus pulled out shortly after seven o'clock. We stopped in Escondido to pick up that contingent, and were then off for the day.

Our first stop at Dave Grigsby's, slightly ahead of schedule, was the usual feast of beautiful plants, temptingly displayed, with boxes available for our convenience in assembling our purchases. The hothouses, filled with familiar, not so familiar, and rare, plants, were attended by the efficient Grigsby staff, making our selections as easy and as painless as possible. Madelyn was really buzzing in the cactus shed, answering questions and filling requests.

The succulent house was filled with irresistible beauties, and the open beds were equally tempting.

And Dave made sapotes available to those who wanted to gather them.

From the number of full boxes going into the 'bus luggage compartment when we left, a very satisfied bunch of members were there.

Then on to the beautiful Desert Nursery in Riverside, now operated by Don Brown. I was there several years ago, and many impressive changes and improvements have been made since then. It's beautiful! Our gracious host greeted our arrival with a great urn of hot coffee, replenished throughout our visit, and a table of every kind of Winchell's doughnut, all of which quickly disappeared. Tables and benches were available in the lovely patio for our sack lunches to be eaten any time. The lathhouses and open areas were full of a dazzling variety of beautiful plants, and, when we left, the second luggage compartment in the 'bus had to be opened to accommodate the loot. I know there will be many return visits to this delightful nursery.

A nice surprise was the arrival of Lillian Pickoff, wife of the Past President of C.S.S.A., who came over from Riverside to greet us.

From Riverside we came back to Tropic World, where Paul Hutchison had on sale, among other outstanding offerings, plants from the Hummel Exotic Gardens. And while the cactus and succulent presentations were tempting, I really got hung up in the "Jungle World". Fantastic!

The choice buys from Tropic World were added to the already bulging 'bus, and we were ready to start for home, dropping off our Escondido members on the way.

I'm sure we all missed the enthusiastic and knowledgable companionship of Helen Hegyi -- hope it will be the last time without her.

It's wonderful to be back on the "caravan route" again, Martin. We've missed it. Thanks.

Certainly our bragging table should be overflowing for a long time to come.

SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OFFICERS

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IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT	Martin L. Mooney	97 K Street Chula Vista, Ca. 92011	427-6796

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The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is open to all persons interested in growing Cacti, Other Succulents, and Exotic Plants.

Dues are \$6.00 annually; Single copies of Espinas y Flores are \$0.50.

Meetings are the second Saturday of each month, 1:30 p.m. in Room 101 of Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. (Exceptions noted in Espinas y Flores.)

Executive Board Meeting after the General Meeting.

Deadline for December Issue..... November 22nd..PLEASE!!

~~Audrey Johnson~~
226 Citracado Pky.
Escondido, CA 92025

no Correction Requested