

Espinas y Flores

Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society, Inc.

Affiliated with the Cactus and Succulent Society of America

Volume 35, Number 10, Saturday, October 14, 2000 at 1:00 PM



October Program – Texas Treasurers



From left to right: Tom De Merritt, Stan Yalof, Phil Favell, and Herb Stern

When it comes to cactus exploration, these guys mean business! This team spent nearly two weeks exploring the cactus country of west Texas in Oct. 1999 and April 2000. They saw and photographed all sorts of fantastic plants including the mystical *Lophophora williamsii*. Unfortunately, they also witnessed habitat destruction on a massive scale. Come and see their photographic tour on Sat. Oct 14 at 1:00 PM Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

Cover: One of the most spectacular sights De Merritt and company saw in Texas was *Ariocarpus fissuratus* in bloom. The front cover is a historic wood cut of this plant by A. Blanc that was published in Englemann's *Cactaceae of the Boundary* from 1858.

Please send your letters, artwork, poetry, Cactus or Succulent of the Month articles, puzzles, comments, or criticisms, etc. to:

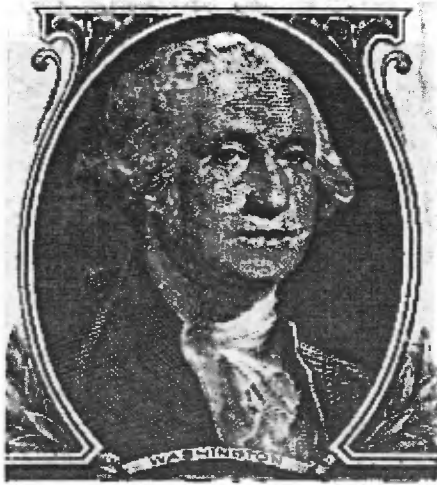
Tom Knapik
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La Mesa, CA 91941

Phone 619-462-1805 email eyf2000@aol.com FAX 858-569-8510

Newsletter submissions are due before the 14th each month unless other arrangements are made.

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President's Message for OCTOBER

Our annual picnic was a hit, the weather and company were perfect and the food was delicious! We had an attendance of around 60 members. A thank you goes out to the members who brought plants for the silent auction.

Room 101 renovation is progressing slowly, however, it's expected to be finished by the end of September. We will plan on meeting in Room 101 for the October meeting. If, by chance, the room is not ready, the club will meet in Room 104, the same room where the July and August meetings were held.

I'm happy to announce that we have a volunteer member for each of the 4 Officer positions that will be available for the 2001-2002 term. The nominating committee, which is composed of the following members: Joey Betzler, Phyllis Flechsig and Stan Yalof have done a fine job. The volunteers for these positions will be announced during the October meeting and an election/vote will be take place during the November general meeting. If you are interested in any of the Officer positions please contact one of the nominating committee members.



The Nomination Committee for 2000 has presented the following Slate of officers to serve during the 2001 to 2002 term:

President – Pam Badger
Vice President – Jeff Harris
Treasurer – George Plaisted
Secretary – Laura De Merritt

Nominations from the floor will be taken at the October meeting and elections will be held at the November meeting. If you have any questions regarding this procedure you may refer to the club bylaws, contact a board member, or the nomination committee: Phyllis Flechsig 760-753-5942 or Joey Betzler 858-569-8510 or Stan Yalof 760-743-1560

PLEASE SHOW UP AND VOTE

Calendar of Upcoming Events

☒ OCTOBER

— 2000 —

- 14 Central Oklahoma C&SS Fall Sale, Will Rogers Garden Center, 3400 NW 36th St, Oklahoma City OK. Info Joyce Bateman-Hochtritt, 408-737-1831, cactibud@aol.com
- 14 Plant sale at Casa del Prado, purchase a native plant from the San Diego chapter of the California Native Plant Society
- 14-15 Orange County C&SS Show, Cal State Fullerton, Toni Garretson, 714-539-8773, sharkark@aol.com
- 17 Dudleyas - the Live Forever will be presented at the SDCNPS meeting by Mark Dodero at Casa del Prado, Room 104 at 7:30 PM
- 20-21 New Mexico Xeriscape Conference, Albuquerque Convention Center. Info
- 21-22 San Gabriel C&SS Winter Show & Sale, Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia, CA. Info Woody Minnich, 661-944-2784, Vince Basta, 714-738-1422

☒ NOVEMBER

- 20 Palomar C&SS Show, Joslyn Senior Center, 724 N Broadway, Escondido CA. Info 760-743-1560

☒ FEBRUARY

— 2001 —

- ?? C&SS of New Zealand Annual General Meeting And Convention, Auckland, New Zealand Info; Joan Wells, j.m.wells@xtra.co.nz or www.cactus-mall.com/cssnz/index.html

☒ MARCH

- 13-16 C&SS of the ACT, SUCCULENTICON 2001, Canberra. Info Annette & Mike Smith, PO Box 484, Mawson ACT 2607, 02 6386 2984, mmsmith@dynamite.co.au

☒ JUNE

- 2-3 SDCSS Spring Show and Sale
- 30-1 CSSA Show & Sale, Huntington Botanical Gdns, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA.

☒ JULY

- 1-6 CSSA Convention, Warner Center Marriott, 21850 Oxnard St, Woodland Hills CA. Please note that this is the correct date—some Affiliate newsletters are still reporting erroneous dates!! see www.cssainc.org/convent.html for details

☒ SEPTEMBER

- 1 Huntington Symposium, Huntington Botanical Gdns, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA. Info.

FYI FYI FOR YOUR INFORMATION FYI FYI

- ⇒ SDCSS member Marilyn Newcomer was published in Open Gates, the newsletter of the Gates Cactus and Succulent Society. She did a great job on her article regarding Notocactus.
- ⇒ Thanks are due to John & Mary Cooper of Cooper's Cactus, they donated plants to the SDCSS auction to help raise money for the club. Please don't forget to thank them for their support!
- ⇒ Do you want to take a trip to India, Africa or Madagascar to look at succulent plants? SDCSS member and Succulent Plant Publisher Herman Schwartz (Strawberry Press) is offering \$2,000 IN TRAVEL EXPENSES, to five lucky full members of the CSSA. All of the details are in the next issue of the *Cactus and Succulent Journal*, if you don't get it your are not a member. Call Kelly Griffin for information on how to join at 760-942-4866.
- ⇒ The Huntington Succulent Plants Symposium covered varied subjects this year. The program started out with Jim Folsom relating how difficult it will be for botanical and horticultural institutions to disseminate plant material. CITES and the Rio Accords will have an impact on plant collecting now. Do you have plants that were collected before 1992, they are now more valuable - keep them alive! Sean Hogan talked about the floras in Northeastern Mexico for use in the Central Pacific Coast. Robert Chinnock talked about Mesembs. One of the highlights was Eva and Voytek Foik and their 3D slides. If you ever get the opportunity to see one of their three dimensional presentations take it! Robert Benson of *Bat Conservation International* gave us a presentation on Bats and the environment. The goal of BCI is to get rid of the undeserved stigma attached to the these important mammals. We all got a tour of the new Botanical Building. Jim has been working on raising the new center at The Huntington, it will be done early next year.
- ⇒ Baja Garden Volunteers from SDCSS and PCSS, helped out again at the Wild Animal Park in the Baja Greenhouse. Chris Miller, Juergen Menzel, Tom De Merritt, Eugene Orth, Marcy Rose, Marty Zirkle, and Stan Yalof. They worked on: removing debris from the greenhouses and the surrounding area, an inventory of supplies, repotted many seed grown plants, and a long term project to protect the plants in the greenhouse. All of these folks are contributing to our the October 28 & 29 Garden Celebration at the Wild Animal Park. We can use more help during this weekend and in the Greenhouse. Please call Chris to offer your support for these projects: at Home 619-258-9915 or send e-mail to: MillerCR@SUPSHIP.NAVY.MIL.

The Genus *Monadenium*

by Tom De Merritt

Monadenium belongs in the *Euphorbiaceae* family, which contains about 320 genera and over 8000 species of geographically widespread plants, which range from annual herbs to large trees. The genus *Monadenium* has 50 known species, 46 of which are confined to tropical East Africa. Its eastern distribution line is the Indian Ocean. This genus does not exist in Madagascar. Throughout its area of distribution endemic species, varieties and forms of *Monadenium* are numerous, with their habitat often being restricted to a singular hilltop. This high rate of endemism suggests a recent origin and/or a strict response to its environment, which sets limits on the expansion of distribution.

All *Euphorbiaceae* have a milky sap that may be harmful to the touch. The inflorescence has a complicated structure, based on the cyathium, which consists of an involucre containing one reduced female flower and several male flowers. There are protective bracts and nectarines. The fruit is a capsule, which explodes on reaching maturity.

The word "Monadenium" is derived from Greek, meaning "Single Gland". F. Pax originated the name in 1895 based on the initial species of the genus to be described, *Monadenium coccineum*. This distinguishing characteristic for which the name was applied emanates from the flower structure. Flowers consist of a cup-like bracteate head, truncate at the top, open at one side or below the middle with a "single gland" of varying width on its top margin. Each has an interior series of 5 membranous lobes. Bracts

persistent similar to its closest cousin *Euphorbia* with either gaping or overlapping margins.

Many forms occur within the genus from the diminutive terrestrial to an 18-foot arborescent variety. All known species of *Monadenium* are perennials, which always possess tuberous perennial roots and annual herbaceous growth. The bulk of these are what is termed geophytes, plants adapted to specific climate and ecological condi-

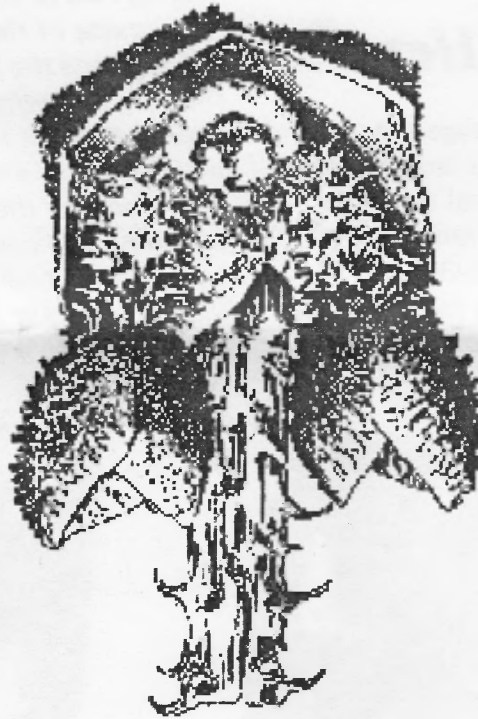
tions, which include extended periods of drought. Many *Monadeniums* have comparatively large rootstocks and a minimum of organs necessary for reproduction so that minimum energy is wasted on developing stems above the ground.

Although the genus is remarkably free from disease and insects it is susceptible to rot when exposed to moisture in the winter. The genus across the board is a winter dormant plant and as such must be kept absolutely dry during this period.

All species of *Monadenium* contain copious latex composed of

resins, mucilage and euphorbic acid in varying proportions. Some are highly irritating to the skin. None of the species have been determined to have any commercial value although some of the spineless varieties are browsed upon by game animals and indigenous cattle.

Culture of the genus varies between species but the general rules of succulents apply with this genus. Well-drained soil is always required, water only when in leaf and feed with low nitrogen fertilizer during the growing period. Exposure to



Peter Bally's drawing of a *Monadenium* flower.

sunlight varies depending on the species/variety. The plant should be shaded if signs of sunburn occur. Typically the anthocyanins (the red pigments) will present themselves when given too much sun, hence the opposite with a well-shaded plant, the chlorophyll will become prominent when more shade is given. It's always a battle to find a happy medium.

There are too many species to talk about them individually so I encourage anyone with uncommon and/or exotic specimens to bring them to the October meeting. I will be bringing approximately twenty plants for display.

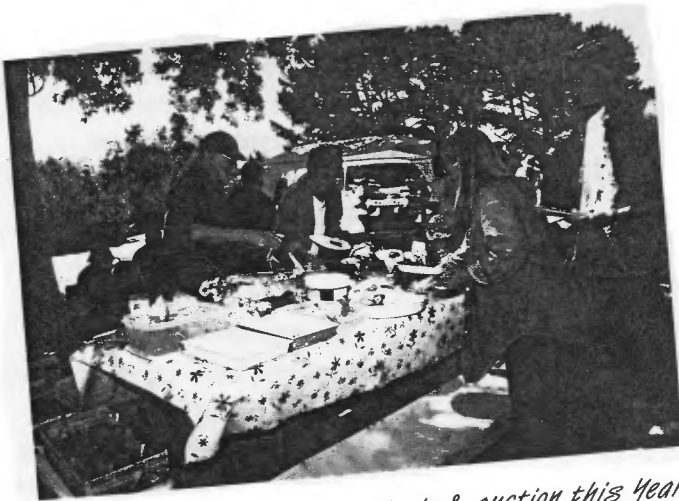
Literature cited: Peter Bally, *The Genus Monadenium* 1961

The Ants Are Here!

This seems to be a year of a huge ant population explosion.....I thought I was the only one to notice the abundance of ants in the yard this year, but apparently not. It was a hot topic at our local Kensington Garden Club meeting last week, and I see the SD Orchid Society published 2 recipes of

homemade ant bait in their last issue.....The first rx is by: The Bug man (Richard Fagerlund) <http://www.askthebugman.com> and is found below. Kay Q

There is an ant bait you can make at home. This recipe calls for boric acid. You want to be sure to use technical boric acid instead of medicinal boric acid which can be mistaken for sugar or salt. Mix three cups of water with one cup of sugar and four teaspoons of technical boric acid formulated for pest control. Wrap several jam jars with masking tape. For a large infestation, pour a half cup or so of bait into each of the jars, which have been loosely packed with absorbent cotton. If you have children or pets, screw the lids tightly onto the jars and seal with adhesive tape. Then pierce the lids, making two or three small holes, and smear the outside of the jars with some of the baited syrup. Place the jars where the ants are foraging and where children and pets can't disturb them. It may take a few days but eventually the ants will be swarming to the jars. Some of the ants will die near the jars but most will carry the poison back to the colony. Don't kill the ants massed around the jars. Just let the bait work and you shouldn't have any problem.



Were you at the Picnic & auction this year? A great time was had by all. Good food - some old standards and some new dishes that we all hope will become standards! The weather was fabulous with an exceptional summer day even for San Diego. The auction went well this year. All the bids were silent so the sound of pens and pencils writing on paper was heard up to the last minute as bids were written. This year there were no minimum bids and 90% of the proceeds went back to the donor. Thanks for participating ... see you next year!



Thanks to Kay Quijada for the snapshots here and on page 2

Oreocereus, Cephalocereus, and Pilosocereus

A Look at Some Hairy Cactus

by Pam Badger



Cephalocereus senilis - seedlings

I decided to write about these fascinating plants because they are some of the specimens which first catch the eye of the neophyte cactophile. Many people have been brought to the wider world of Cactus and Succulents through these attractive, hairy plants. Since our library was not available for the last couple of meetings, I did most of my research over the internet.

Cephalocereus senilis, or the 'Old Man Cactus' has been called "the most popular cactus in cultivation." With its columnar form and long, white, hairs which all but hide the short, white spines beneath, this plant is popular. Young plants have long been shipped all over the world. In the early 1970's when Lee and I used to buy cactus in Vista to sell in San Francisco, the old man cactus was always in demand but rarely seen after being sold; they can be difficult in cultivation, especially in foggy San Francisco.

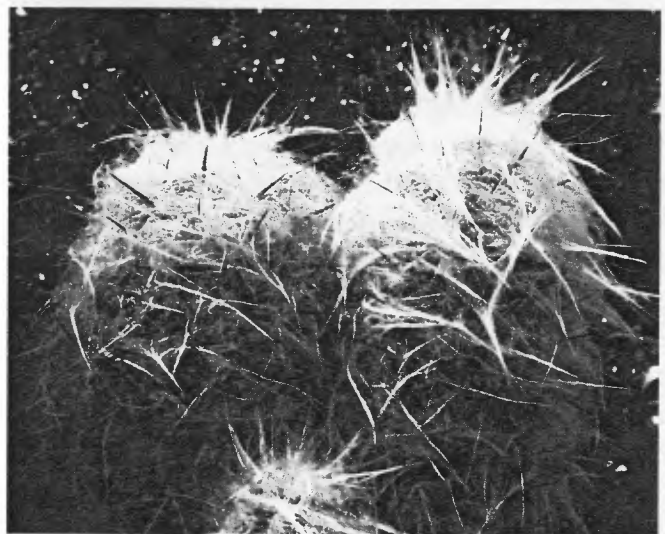
The type locality for these plants is Mexico with distribution in the states of Hidalgo and Guanajuato. The plants grow 18 to 30 or even 45 feet high in habitat. Columnar, simple or rarely, branched above, sometimes at the base. Large plants are not often seen since the species grows in regions difficult to access. It is common on limestone hills of eastern Hidalgo. A pseudocephalium develops on plants over six

meters from which the rose colored flowers emerge. The name *Cephalocereus* is from the Greek, signifying 'headed-cereus' with reference to the pseudocephalium.

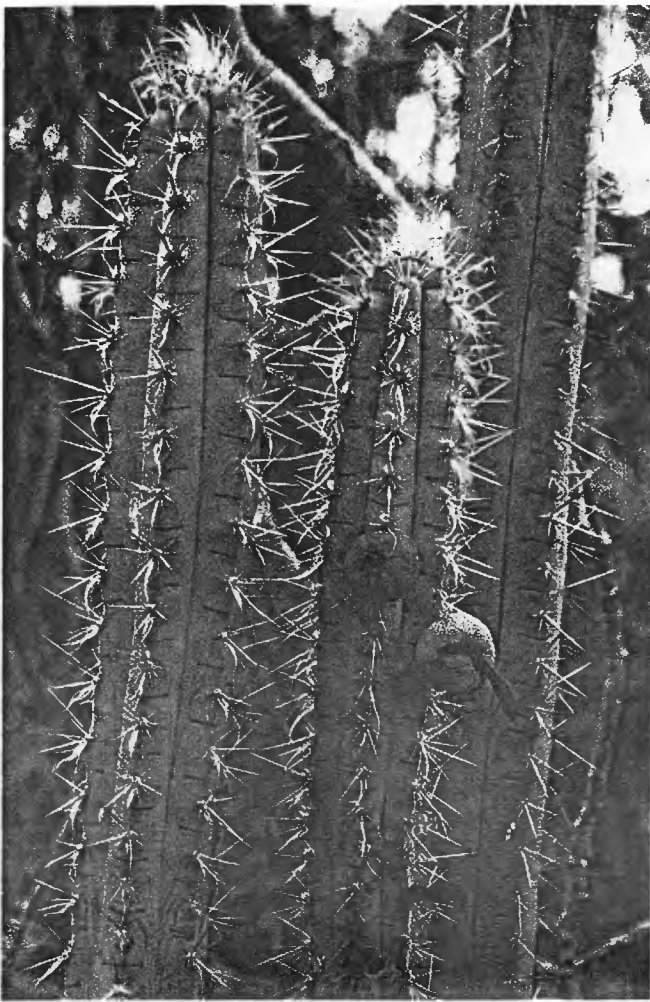
Cultivation can be outdoors in mild climates where temperatures do not go below 40° F. They can also be grown in homes or greenhouses. These cactus are very slow growing; the largest specimens I have see are the six to eight foot beauties at Lotusland.

In Britton and Rose (1963) there are 48 species of *Cephalocereus* listed, many have since been moved to other genera. According to Botany.com, the only other species currently are *C. chrysacanthus*, *C. hopenstedtii*, *C. leucephalus*, and *C. nobilis*. The CITES Checklist only Recognizes three: *C. apiciephalium*, *C. columna-trajani* and *C. senilis*.

Oreocereus is another of the commonly grown hairy cereus. The name is from Greek meaning mountain-cereus and is commonly known as the 'Old Man of the Mountains.' The genus is comprised of mostly columnar shaped cacti found in high altitudes from Peru to Bolivia and Argentina. They are covered in long, white, hairlike spines which grow more dense in strong sunlight. This dense hairs protects them from the intense sun and cold of the mountains in which they grow. Strong,



Oreocereus trolli - under those hairs are spines



Pilosocereus glaucochrous - one of the blue cacti

needle like spines of white, red or straw color hide in the dense hair. They form prostrate clumps or erect plants to over ten feet. Flowers appear after many years and are trumpet shaped reddish to purple-violet.

In cultivation they prefer temperatures that do not go below 45°F and do best in rich porous, sandy soil. The plants seem to do better when they completely dry out between waterings. In our landscape, in Spring Valley, several large specimens of *O. celcianus* are thriving. Once they reached about four feet, they began to develop prostrate clumps, growing cantaloupe-sized pups around the base. They have not bloomed yet, though a three foot specimen of *O. hendricksonii*, growing in a pot blooms regularly. Botany.com lists the following species: *O. celcianus*, *O. doelizianus*, *O. fossulatus*, *O. hendricksonii* var. *densilantus*, *O. pseudofossulatus*, and *O. trolli*.

Another interesting genus along these lines are the *Pilosocereus*. There are apparently many different species of *Pilosocereus* and the nomenclature has

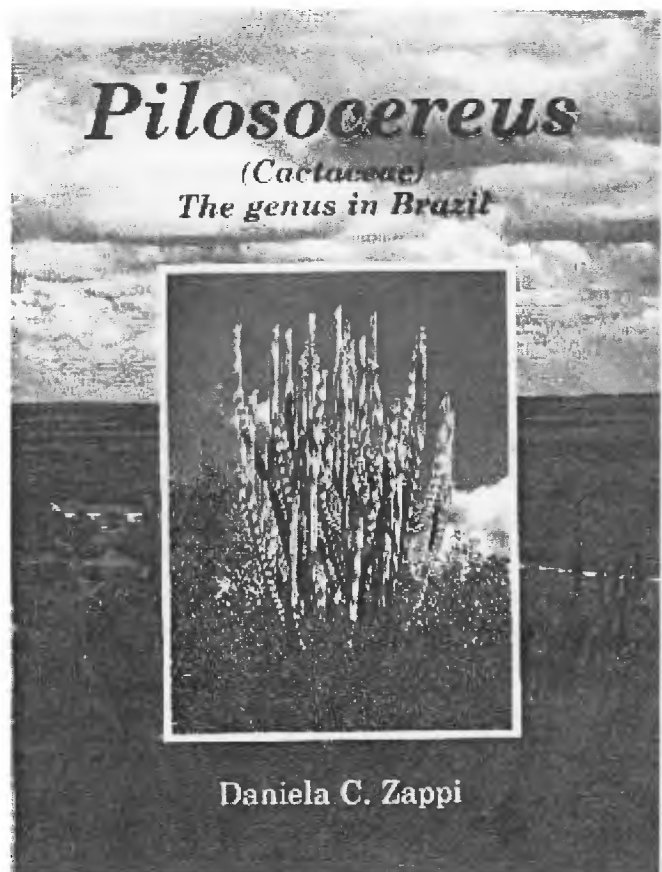
changed from the older references. There is a new book out , *Pilosocereus: The Genus in Brazil* by Daniela Zappi which looks good. The most northerly species, *P. palmerii* grows up into Mexico, tolerates lower temperatures and does well in landscapes in San Diego. I saw this plant growing in central Nicaragua from rock outcrops in the middle of open fields. Their striking blue bodies with prominent ribs covered in dense, snowy white hairs stood out like so many older people standing amongst the trees. The six foot specimen in our landscape blooms regularly at night and I have witnessed bats visiting the bright white flowers. Around 35 species are recognized in the Checklist.

References:

The Cactaceae by Britton and Rose
 CITES Cactaceae Checklist compiled by David Hunt
www.botany.com;
www.desert-tropicals.com

Photos:

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Succulent by Gordon Rowley
<http://www.cactuspro.com/images/img278.jpg>
<http://www.fortunecity.com/greenfield/swallowtail/785/images.html>



Floyd Gable 1903 - 2000

One of the oldest original members of the SDCSS, Floyd Gable, passed away last month. Floyd was a truly remarkable man. At the age of 97 his memory and plant knowledge right to the end of his ninth decade illustrates his keen mind and love of his hobby.

Floyd's love of plants started at the age of 13 when his father, an architect who designed many civic buildings in Ohio, encouraged Floyd to assist him in landscaping. This led him to join a nursery business at age 17, with a special interest in roses and their hybridization.

A few years later, after enlisting in the army, his skill at boxing was recognized, and his entire two years of service were spent in the boxing arena. He left the service an amateur boxing champion.

Always restless with a tendency to wanderlust, he traveled all over the country, but eventually connected up with a Sears & Roebuck program in Ohio and pursued managerial training. After finishing this program he was sent to California to set up some Sears stores. He found he couldn't be happy in this type of work, he loved nature and the outdoors too much. Finding other employment was difficult so he phoned his cousin, Clark Gable (of movie fame) and asked for help in getting work. Because Floyd had had previous experience studying photography, Clark got him a job as a photographer in the studios where he worked for several years, but Floyd disliked the Hollywood life and all it stood for. Later, he used these photography skills to amass a huge collection of nature photos, desert life, and plants, some of which were bought by Arizona Highways, Sunset Magazine, and other publications.

Floyd's managerial experience with Sears led him to San Diego where he was employed setting up stores for Walker Scott. Still pursuing his love of plants, he had to shift his interest in growing roses to cacti and succulents because of his wife's serious allergy to the scent of roses. His previous visits to California and especially to the Huntington Gardens in 1938, gave him some insight to the variety and beauty of these plants.

In San Diego, he was one of the first members of the small SDCSS about 1963 and was later awarded a life time membership. Floyd became known around the County for his knowledge of plants and was often consulted by the San Diego Zoo and other botanical institutions. He helped set up the botanical part of the Wild Animal Park when its plans were only on paper, and with his good friend, Bob Taylor, provided and installed many plants collected in Baja. He was also instrumental in helping people set up their own cactus and succulent nurseries in San Diego County.

Floyd was active in our Club until 3 years ago. At age 92 he still carried in flats of plants for our sales table, and was still enthusiastic about acquiring new plants for himself. His enthusiasm and compelling desire to learn lasted until the final years of his life when he had to use heavy magnifiers for the books he loved to consult. He firmly believed in people's power to educate themselves, and he was a prime example of that philosophy.

Floyd died from a series of falls, when he insisted on independent movement without help. He is survived by his wife (in a nursing home) and his son, Gary, who devoted his time to caring for them both.

Floyd leaves a memory of a wonderful man who loved people, plants, and the pursuit of knowledge, which made him a happy man.

Shirley Berry

WHAT'S THE STATUS?

by Tom Knapik

Topic #7: Update on Saguaro Population

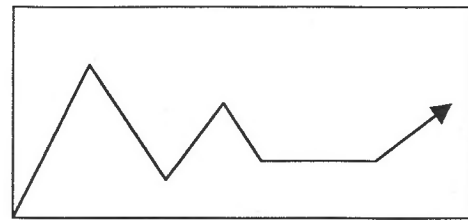
Some good news on a thorny issue: The saguaro cactus population, at least in Saguaro National Park, is soaring.

Park researchers have found a hefty increase in new plants over the past decade. They estimate that the total number has risen from less than a million to an estimated 1.62 million saguaros today.

But they caution that that doesn't necessarily translate to similar gains all across southern Arizona. Factors ranging from invasion of exotic grasses to sprawling urbanization have had a damaging effect.

Park Supt. Frank Walker called the increase among small, young saguaros "just great news. However, continued monitoring will certainly be required."

Researchers began a sampling study 10 years ago to determine the number of saguaros, which



are found only in part of Arizona and in northern Mexico.

The stately saguaro can grow 50 feet tall and weigh a few tons or more, mostly stored water. It often will not flower before it is 50 years old or grow its first arm before 70. It can live for 200 years.

The researchers created 25 sampling plots, each nearly 10 acres in size, in the park's eastern district and 20 more in the park's western district.

Mark Holden, a Park Service biologist, said the estimate based on the sampling has a range of error of plus or minus 320,000 saguaros.

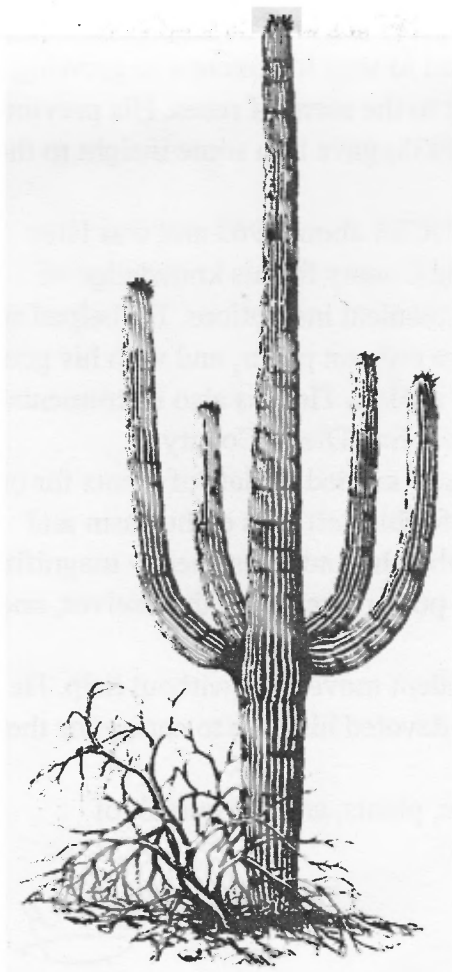
The study estimated that juvenile saguaros, from 4 inches to almost 20 inches tall, have increased by 125%. Many may have started in the early 1980s but were too small to be seen in the 1990 study.

"The saguaro is a very long-lived species, and to look at 10 years in the span of the population is just a snapshot," Holden said. "This is something we'll continue to have to study in the future.

"In general, the conditions for establishing saguaros are met probably just a couple of times a century, and it seems like there was a lot of doom and gloom predicted for the fate of the saguaro simply because we weren't seeing now saguaros coming back in," Holden said.

The younger population of saguaros has probably become established through a few years of more rainfall than average during the 1980s and 1990s, Holden said.

Many deserts, and their saguaro populations, have disappeared in the maws of bulldozers expanding metropolitan Phoenix and Tucson. And increasingly, exotic invasive grasses are crowding in around saguaros.



This article was submitted by Shirley Berry from an Associated Press report published August 31, 2000

**7th Annual Winter Show
and Plant Sale**

**Saturday and Sunday
October 21 and 22**

9:00 Am to 5:00 PM each day

at the

**L. A. County Arboretum,
301 N. Baldwin Ave.
Arcadia, California**

Call:

Tom at 626-798-2430

or

Bill at 626-332-8008

for more information

Native Plant Sale

at

Casa del Prado

Saturday October 14



OVER 135 SPECIES AVAILABLE



This is the annual San Diego, California Native Plant Society Sale. Did you know that the Fall is the correct time to plant native plants? Buy a plant, support CNPS and save some water.

Call Joan at 858-277-9485 or Don at 858-755-5143 for more information.

**Orange County Cactus
and Succulent Society
Show and Sale**

October 14-15

Cal. State Fullerton

Information:

Toni Garretson

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or

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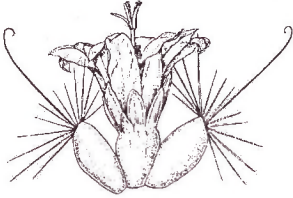


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 and Kay Quijada

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 and Joyce Buckner

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 Betzler and Kay Quijada

Winter Show - Ed DeLollis

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 Susan Hopkins

CSSA Affiliate Rep. -

Kelly Griffin

Quail Botanic Gardens -
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Foundation - George Flaisted

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Elizabeth Glover

S. D. Wild Animal Park's Baja and
 Succulent Collections - J. Betzler

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Plant Sales and Supplies:

Annual Sales - Tom Birt

Auction and Holiday Plants - L. Badger,
 and Tom DeMerritt

Benefit Table - Kay Quijada and L. Badger

Monthly Plant Sales - Jeff Harris and
 Greg Wade

Monthly Supply Sales - George and Jerry
 Flaisted

Publicity: Tom DeMerritt and Stan Yalof

Programs: Kelly Griffin (760-942-4866)

Reception:

Ethel Standish

Regalement:

Monthly - Lee Badger, Rudy Lime and

Stefy Mangold

Picnic - Laura and Tom DeMerritt

The SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY, INC. is open to all persons interested in growing cacti and other succulent plants. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month (except June, Sept. and Dec.) at 1:00 PM in room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Executive Board meetings are open to all members; call any officer or director for the time and location. Annual dues are \$15.00 per single member per year, \$5.00 for each additional (associate) member within the same household. Single copies of *Espinás y Flores* are \$2.00 per copy sent within the USA; foreign subscriptions are \$30.00. Affiliated with the CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC. SDCSS Web Page available soon please stay tuned for address.