

MAMMILLARIA THORNERI

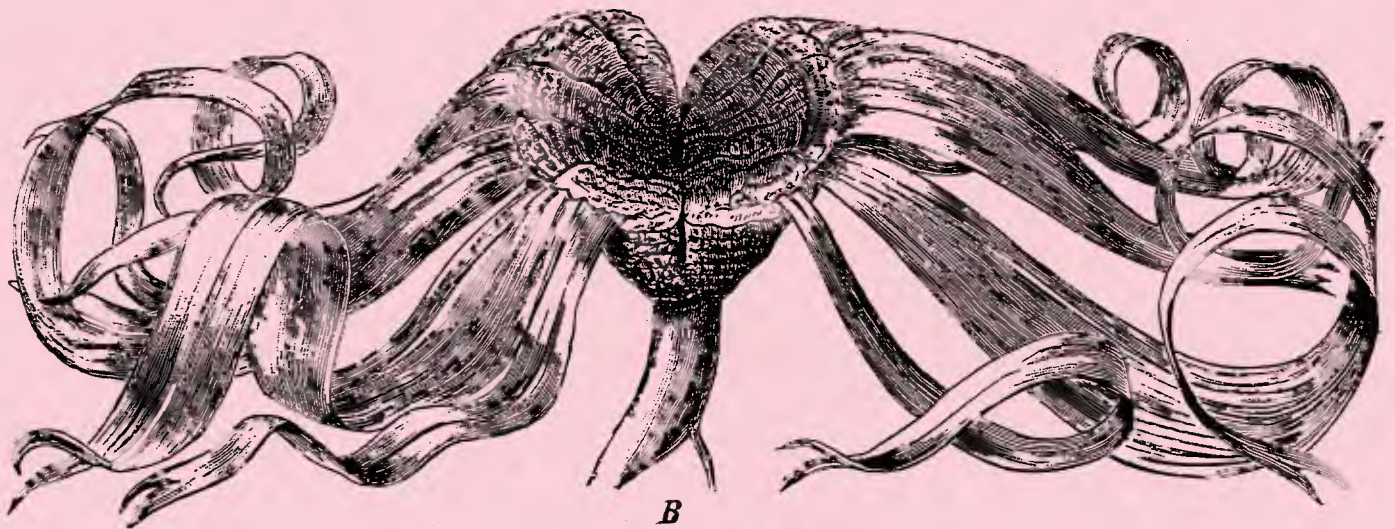
Espinas y Flores

NEWSLETTER of the SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY, INC.
Affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc.

VOLUME XXXII NUMBER FOUR, SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1997 @ 1:00 PM



A



B

The unusual gymnosperm Welwitschia mirabilis of the Namib Desert of Africa, as illustrated in the monograph by A. W. Eichler in Engler and Prantl's Die Naturlichen Pflanzenfamilien (1889). A: young plant. B: old plant with split leaves. Successful propagation and growth can be achieved by planting in a tall drainage tile to accommodate the deep root.

APRIL PROGRAM: THE ALOE CONFERENCE 1996 AND A TOUR OF SOUTHERN AFRICA BY PHYLLIS FLECHSIG AND DOROTHY BYER

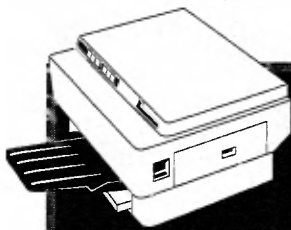
All of you should be acquainted with SDC&SS members Phyllis Flechsig and Dorothy Byer. Phyllis is an excellent grower, a Quail Botanical Gardens docent, an active member of the Palomar C&SS, and a Life Member of the SDC&SS. Don't miss Phyllis' terrific article about the tour of southern Africa in this issue. Dorothy is also an active member of this society, the Palomar C&SS, and the San Diego Bromeliad Society. She is also an excellent artist. As a matter of fact, one of her Aloe paintings will be the featured logo for the 1997 CSSA Convention. This is sure to be an excellent and educational program.

Cactus & Succulent-of-the-Month: UGLY by Thomas Knapik

In the back of my small green house there is a shelf for plants that are so hideous and ugly, I cannot bear to look at them on a daily basis. Tucked away until the day, month, or year when they have either outgrown their deformities or died, they serve as an embarrassment — a reminder of past sins. We all have plants such as these. They represent many of the classic mistakes made by the hobbyist when growing cacti and succulents: too much sun, spider mite scars, not enough sun, slug & snail trails, fertilizer burn, the creeping crud, a windy night, a sleep-walking houseguest mistakes your plant for a urinal, or a cat mistakes your plant for a scratch post, etc. . . . The list is long.

Now is the time to put aside your pride and bring forth these rejected plants. During the presentation we will bare our souls and share our errors in growing these plants. Hopefully, we can learn from each other's mistakes. We will end this presentation with a people's choice, a contest of sorts: "The Ugliest Plant Award" will be presented to the owner of the ugliest plant brought in.

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



MICHAEL & JOYCE BUCKNER, EDITORS
4822 SANTA MONICA AVENUE, #103
SAN DIEGO, CA 92107
PHONE OR FAX: (619) 222-3216

PUBLICATION DEADLINE IS THE 20th of the prior month.

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Sadly, we have just learned that **Christian Standish**, spouse to Life Member **Ethel Standish**, has past away. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to you, Ethel.

Remember **Paul & Joan Johnson**? They were very active SDC&SS members before moving from Fallbrook to New Mexico. We noticed in the New Mexico Cactus & Succulent Society Newsletter get well wishes for **Joan Johnson** (still a SDC&SS member). Apparently Joan had surgery sometime in February. We, too, wish her well and hope she is now well on the mend. If you would like to drop Joan a note - call the editors, we have a P.O.Box address for the Johnsons.

The **Del Mar Fair** will run from **June 17th through July 6th** this year. The registration deadline for entries in the Flower and Garden Show is Friday, May 2. To obtain the handbook with entry forms or for additional information please call (619) 792-4273.

The objective for the **Anza Borrego Foundation** is "**To acquire private lands within Anza-Borrego Desert State Park for transfer to the park for future generations to enjoy.**" Don't delay - Join today: Anza Borrego Foundation, P.O.Box 2001, Borrego Springs, CA 92004.

March 22 - April 6: Thousands & Thousands of Butterflies plus Orchids at the San Diego Wild Animal Park. Call (760) 234-6541 for additional information.

April 11 - 13: The Annual Coronado Flower Show - Registration Friday 4-6pm or Saturday 7-9:30am; Show all day Saturday and Sunday; contact Donald Bloom @ 619-437-8445 regarding plant entries. But you don't need to be an entrant to enjoy this grand affair! Exhibits feature bonsais, cut flowers, orchids, flower arrangements, cactus & succulents, as well as many educational displays, and live music & entertainment. **Don't miss the Wild Flower Display.**

April 12 - 13: Southcoast Cactus & Succulent Show & Sale at the Southcoast Botanic Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula. Open show - info: 310-832-2262.

April 15: Lisa Chaddock, cultural ecologist, "Ethnobotany of the Desert Kumeyaay" presented by the San Diego Chapter of the **CA Native Plant Society Meeting** - 7:30pm, Room 104, Casa del Prado - Balboa Park. Ms. Chaddock will discuss the types of plants used by the Desert Kumeyaay Indians prior to contact with the Spanish, including medicinals and plant fibers used for shelter and clothing.

If you are among the lucky people who saw **Woody Minnich's** excellent March Program, **An AAA Guide to Mexico — *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, & *Aztekium***, here's the explanation on what those natives were doing with those weedy looking euphorbia bushes:

IT MELTS IN YOUR MOUTH, NOT IN YOUR HANDS: *Euphorbia antispyhilitica* was named for its use by cowboys and early settlers in the Chihuahuan Desert and adjacent regions as a supposed preventive of syphilitic infection. In an unusual twist of history it later became used by millions of people in the United States, Mexico and elsewhere around the world for a quite different reason. Perhaps most readers of this paragraph have consumed a substance from this desert plant. Where the plant is native in Mexico harvesters make treks out to the hills where it grows and rip it up, roots and all, from the desert. The plants are bundled and lashed high on the backs and sides of burros to be transported to a camp in the desert where they are boiled in water to which sulphuric acid has been added. A wax from the plant forms a scum on the surface. This is raked off, thrown into buckets and taken to Candelilla wax collection centers to be purified. This edible wax remains hard under conditions of high heat and humidity as opposed to chocolate and other coverings of candies and confections which stick to wrappers and hands. Because the wax is water soluble it has been widely used as a covering for pellet-sized gums and candies which "melt in your mouth, not in your hands." Although chocolate bars are popular in cold regions or in winter the Candelilla wax covered items have proven more marketable in hot desert regions or in summer.

by Boyce Thompson, Southwestern Arboretum, from a special supplement: **LIVING WITH DESERT PLANTS.**

April 17 - 19: 1997 Wildflower Conference in Bakersfield at Red Lion Hotel, Bakersfield. Friday bus tour & lunch at Tehachapi's Mourning Cloak Ranch and Botanical Gardens. Banquet programs and educational displays. Registration (\$133) and information: (805) 872-2188.

April 18: Five Spring Gardens on Tour - Escondido, Rancho Bernardo, & Poway, 10am - 3pm. Tickets \$5 donation - benefits Lake Hodges Native Plant Club; info (760) 741-0829.

April 19: Palomar C&SS Meeting - April Fool's Program - "Stump the Quizmaster", noon @ the Joslyn Senior Center, 724 N. Broadway, Escondido; for additional information: **Stan Yalof** (760) 743-1560.

April 19: Bamboo Sale @ Quail Gardens held by the Southern CA Chapter of the American Bamboo Society, 10am - 3pm. There are at least 100 different varieties of bamboo available.

April 20: Earth Day /EarthFair in Balboa Park. SDC&SS will have a booth and needs your help! See Beverly Kirkegaard's Minutes for March Meeting or call **Pam & Lee Badger** @ (619) 589-1223.

April 25 - 28: 1997 Desert Research Symposium — combining the Mohave Desert Quaternary and the Desert Studies Consortium Symposiums at the San Bernardino County Museum, Redlands, CA 92374. Registration (\$25) and information: (909) 387-2582 or (909) 798-8570.

April 26: Through Garden Gates - Garden Tour of North County gardens in Del Mar, Solana Beach, Fairbanks Ranch and Rancho Sante Fe. Contact Caroline Stabile (619) 756-4551.

April 26 - November 15: Quail Botanical Gardens presents "Don't Panic. . . It's Organic". This five hour workshop, which is scheduled to run on six different dates, covers the fundamentals of Natural Pest Control. For reservations / information: (760) 436-3036.

May 2 - 5: Search of *Echinocereus lindsayi* in Baja California with Dr. Jon Rebman, curator of Botany for SD Natural History Museum. Participants will camp in giant boulder fields of Cataviña. Registration (\$110) and information: (619) 232-3821, ext# 203.

May 3 - 4: Sunset Succulent Society Show & Sale at the Garden Room - Veteran's Memorial Building, 4117 Overland (at Culver), Culver City. For info Rosalie Gorchoff (310) 822-1783.

May 10: Lake Hodges Native Plant Club Guided Tour of California Nativescape Botanical Garden in the Wild Animal Park in Escondido. For information: (760) 487-2269.

May 11: San Diego Epiphyllum Society Annual Show & Sale - 10am-4pm in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Set-up: Sat May 10, 5pm-8pm /Sunday 7am-9:30am. Don't miss this terrific show - your mother will love it!! Info: Randall (619) 460-9069, Ken (619) 588-4163 or **George Plaisted** (619) 583-9551.

May 17: Native Orchids of San Diego County with Bud Close - SDNHM class May 15 7-9pm and field trip on Saturday 8am-4pm. Registration (\$29) and info: (619) 232-3821, ext #203.

May 17 - 18: Huntington Spring Plant Sale at Huntington Botanical Gardens - members only on Saturday - General public Sunday, 10:30am-4:30pm. Information: (818) 405-2160.

May 24: Hugo Cota "The Genus Ferocactus" at Palomar C&SS Meeting, noon at Joslyn Senior Center, 724 N. Broadway, Escondido; for additional information: **Stan Yalof** (619) 743-1560.

May 25: Epiphyllum Society of America Annual Show & Sale at the L.A. County Arboretum.

May 31 - June 1: San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Annual Show & Sale - Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Show set-up on Friday, May 30, 10am-8pm; info on show entries, directions, etc.: contact **Tom Knapik** @ 619-462-1805; plant sales chairman: **Michael Cullen** @ 619-563-5683.

August 14 - 16: The Second Annual Baja California Botanical Symposium presented by the San Diego Natural History Museum, co-sponsored by the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Herbario BCMEX. This will be held at the Museum in Balboa Park and will include a preliminary reception, two days of technical paper presentations, poster sessions, and a dinner at **Quail Botanical Gardens** with **Dr. Reid Moran** as a keynote speaker. Possible field trips are still being planned. Please contact **Dr. Jon Rebman**, Dept. of Botany - SDNHM, P.O.Box 1390, S.D. 92112; (619) 232-3821 ext# 247; e-mail: sdnhmrebman@earthlink.net.

The Monthly Benefit Drawing

Our March drawing table was a great success! Twenty people happily won some *very* desirable plants, such as *Aloe pillansii*, *Rauhia peruviana*, and *Uebelmannia crebispina*, to name just a few. Additionally, our cheerful Treasurer, **Herb Stern**, happily deposited \$139 into our Society's treasury. Pretty good, huh? Looks like we might be on a roll!!

Muchas gracias to the following March donors: **Joe Quijada** for *Kalanchoe synsepala*, **Joe Kraatz** for the **Cactus Garden**, **Kenny & Gloria Graham** for *Jatropha berlanderi*, and **Betty Athy** for *Adenium obesum* var. *multiflorum*, *Mammillaria senilis*, *Astrophytum "Super Kabuto"*, *Lithops optica f. rubra fasciate*, *Notocactus uebelmannianus*, and *Frithia pulcra*.

Many thanks to the generous folks that add true value, beauty and interest to our monthly benefit by donating spectacular specimens to a worthy cause: **The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society, Inc.** Your contributions by either purchasing tickets or donating plants helps the club to afford fine educational programs & exciting speakers, an excellent resource library, our terrific newsletter, and much, much more!

* PLEASE REMEMBER TO CALL BETTY ATHY (469-7647) WHEN YOU HAVE A "BEAUTY" TO DONATE. *

Many Thanks, *Kay Quijada*

BRAG TABLE WINNERS FOR MARCH 1997: JUDGED BY WOODY MINNICH

SUCCULENT:	FIRST PLACE:	Ed Nolan's <i>Euphorbia golisana</i> (syn. <i>E. phillipsiae</i>)
	SECOND PLACE:	Lee Badger's <i>Fockea edulis</i>
	THIRD PLACE:	Marylyn Henderson's <i>Veltheimia bracteata</i>
CACTUS:	FIRST PLACE:	Ed Nolan's <i>Thelocactus bicolor</i> var. <i>bolansis</i>
	SECOND PLACE:	Beverly Kirkegaard's <i>Neoporteria gerocephala</i>
	THIRD PLACE:	Don Patterson's <i>Echinocereus pacificus</i>

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What a fantastic meeting we had in March! Ric Newcomer and Michael Buckner gave informative presentations on *Thelocactus* and *Fockea*, respectively. Woody Minnich's double-slide program of a recent expedition to eastern central Mexico was wonderful. There is nothing like being able to observe very special cacti, like *Astrophytum*, *Aztekium*, and *Ariocarpus*, growing (and blooming) in habitat. Woody's superior photography definitely captured the essence of these beautiful plants. Thank you, Woody! Thanks to all for a great meeting.

Our April meeting will feature a presentation by Phyllis Flechsig and Dorothy Byer on the Aloe Conference 1996, as well as, a botanical tour of Southern Africa that they took following the conference. In May Kelly Griffin will be making his "*Dudleya*" presentation. He has given this program to several other cactus & succulent societies; it's about time he gave it to his "home" club!

This month instead of the normal cactus and succulent of the month presentations, we will be giving presentations regarding preparing plants for show, and we are going to have an "Ugly Plant Contest" to illustrate what can go wrong when growing plants. Let's have some fun with this! I'm sure that most of us have a few plants that we are embarrassed to admit we own! So, please bring in one or two of your ugliest plants — but please, **no live critters on them!!** Brag Table plants should serve as a model of good staging and proper growing techniques. So, please don't forget to bring a special plant at its peak, as well. Our ugly plants need role models — something to look up to!!

Earth Day occurs this month on Sunday, April 20th. We need volunteers to price, label, carry, and transport our club's plants to this event. The society still owns approximately 80 flats of plants — these will be the only plants sold at this event. The EarthFair in Balboa Park offers a unique opportunity for the SDC&SS to educate the general public on some great reasons for growing cactus & succulents, to distribute membership information, and to offer the club's excess plants for sale at very reasonable prices. We will also need volunteers to work the event selling plants and distributing information. Please do what you can to make this event a success by contacting Lee & Pam Badger (589-1223), Joey Betzler (569-8510) or myself, Tom Knapik, (462-1805).

Our annual show and sale is rapidly approaching, May 31st and June 1st. Over the past few years, I have noticed some categories weakening, especially in the cacti division. During the April presentation, information about preparing your plants for show will be discussed. We want everyone to get an early start on preparing their show plants. You make the show better when you enter more plants — if you have never shown plants before — this is the year to begin! You are responsible for making the show better than ever. So get ready for the best one yet. Several changes have been made in the show schedule, categories, and rules, this year. Details of these changes will be discussed at the April and May meetings.

Finally, please keep in mind that April 15 is not only tax day, but also the deadline for the lowest registration rates for attending this summer's CSSA Convention at the Town & Country Hotel /Convention Center, July 5 through 11. Do not miss out on this big event. Hope to see you at the April 12th meeting. Please bring a friend. . . . Bring an ugly plant. . . . Bring some refreshments!

Thanks,

**CONDENSED MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE
SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
March 8, 1997**

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. in room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park by Tom Knapik President.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Tom Knapik made the following announcements:

Unfortunately, Bob Taylor had fallen again and all members were urged to sign the card for him which is on the reception table.

An error had occurred in the newsletter* which stated that there would be no plant sales in connection with the tour of the commercial succulent plant nurseries which will take place during the CSSA Convention. Participants in the tour will be able to purchase plants at the nurseries which will include Grigsby's, Rainbow Gardens and C & J.

The Society has reserved two booths for the Earth Day event which will take place in Balboa Park on April 20. Volunteers are needed to help with plant sales, distributing Society literature, answering questions, etc. Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Tom Knapik (462-1805) or Lee and Pam Badger (589-1223) who are helping to coordinate this effort.

The membership was reminded of the art contest for a logo to be used in connection with the CSSA Convention. The contest is open to everyone and \$200.00 will be awarded to the winner. The deadline for the contest is March 31.

The membership was advised that the Executive Board had approved the Show Committee's recommendation that the Society not sell plants at the Annual Sale in June. The plants for the sale will be supplied by vendors only. It was also agreed that the vendors will pay for all of their table costs. The commission ratio will remain the same as last year with 65% going to the vendor and 35% going to the Society. Michael Cullen has agreed to chair the Plant Sales activities and a Committee meeting will be held in the near future to work out the various details.

BYLAWS Tom Knapik reviewed the major bylaw changes that are being recommended and pointed out two corrections that should be made, but were not shown. It was moved by Shirley Berry that the changes to the bylaws be approved as stated. Motion was seconded by Derith Hughes and carried.

PLANTS OF THE MONTH / BRAG TABLE The locactus, the cactus of the month, was presented by Ric Newcomer, and Michael Buckner discussed Fockea, the succulent of the month. The Bragging Table was judged by Woody Minnich.

PROGRAM Tom Knapik introduced our speaker, Woody Minnich, who gave a presentation on his recent tour of northern and central Mexico which included slides showing Ariocarpus, Astrophytum, Aztekium and several other extraordinary and uncommon Mexican cacti species in habitat. This presentation by Woody was very well received.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Beverly Kirkegaard, Recording Secretary

* Please note: CSSA Convention information submitted camera-ready by Joey Betzler. Newsletter editors did not change or check for accuracy.

A TRIP TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

by Phyllis Flechsig

On September 21, 1996, Dorothy Byer and I set off on a trip that was one of the most exciting and memorable of our lives. We enrolled in the "Succulenta '96" Congress, put on by the Succulent Society of South Africa (of which we are members) in Johannesburg, and we signed up for a two-week tour to view the succulents of southwestern Namibia and the western Cape Province. After a series of long flights we arrived in Johannesburg, where we spent a week attending the conference — slide shows on succulent plants — and trying to recover from jet lag. In advance of the conference there had been a tour, similar to the one we were intending to go on, that was plagued by bad weather and a highly unreliable bus; our tour, at the end of the conference, turned out to be far more satisfactory, with (usually) good weather and an excellent vehicle. Off we set on September 28th, first flying to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia that lies at about its geographical center. Our group was quite international, with eight from various European countries, seven Americans, one South African, and of course the leaders, also South African. Our chief plant-explainer was Graham Williamson, a wonderful tour guide, who seemed to know everything about every plant we saw! He and his wife Françoise made our trip most educational; the driver of the support vehicle, Chris Challis, who saw to it that we were fed (liberally) and housed, was also a great help. Southwestern Namibia, where we spent our first week on the road — traveling almost every day — is a relatively barren area, with many square miles of sand dunes, but the scenery was nearly always impressive. We started by

viewing a number of lifeless-looking plants of *Moringa ovalifolia*, fat, squat, and so ugly only a succulent-lover could love them. Later, we saw *Aloe namibensis* and *Aloe asperifolia*, desiccated but hanging on; and the first of many lithops, *Lithops ruschiorum*, apricot-colored and in good condition.

A day or two later we came to the real thrill (for me): *Welwitschia mirabilis*! There they sat, in a place where hardly anything else can grow, looking ancient and immovable. The area where the welwitschias grow is constantly referred to as a "lunar landscape". Rain is virtually unknown; welwitschias exist because of the coastal fogs that provide the only water they ever get. (Our entire tour took place in winter-rainfall climates.) No, we did not dig up any plants on this trip, however tempted we might have been!

We spent two nights in Swakopmund, a pleasant, rather German town with wide streets and handsome old buildings. While there we enjoyed a really wonderful fish barbecue at our hotel, with pickled herring, smoked fish, broiled shrimp, and two kinds of broiled fish. We accompanied these goodies with a bottle of excellent South African wine, for which we developed quite a taste. Next we visited a farm in rugged countryside that stood in the midst of high crags at about one mile elevation; one could see out a long way to the flat, barren plains below. In the crags were a great variety of succulents, including *Aloe dichotoma* and good old *Cotyledon orbiculata* in bloom; the farm's owner showed us a collection of Bushman artifacts (potsherds and stone tools) laid out on a flat rock, as well as some interesting Bushman paintings.

Succulenta '96 by Phyllis Flechsig continued . . .

The following day we climbed a high hill, the Haalenberg, home to many more succulents, such as *Aloe ramosissima* and the source of many more long views out over the countryside. We drove on to the fishing port of Lüderitz, which might have been pleasant to explore had it not been extremely windy at the time (our lunchtime sandwiches were extra crunchy from the grit blowing into them). We were taken to a sandy flat nearby that looked like absolutely nothing from the bus — you would pass it without a second glance — but that actually contained many kinds of small succulents, mostly mesembs, in bewildering profusion. Because of the strong prevailing wind, nothing was much over three inches high! We all bowed down into the photographer's crouch before *Lithops optica rubra*, which the Europeans nearly drooled over; I felt pleased to know that I had a lot of them at home!

The following morning we toured Kolmanskop, a little ghost town, once the site of active diamond mining, but now gradually being buried in the blowing sand that relentlessly swept through. We went to stay at the guest house at Rosh Pinah mine (well off the beaten track), stopping to admire *Aloe variegata* in bloom along the way, as well as many other small succulents and some lovely bulbs in bloom. The next day we had special permission to drive through the Sperrgebiet, the forbidden diamond-mine area. This was the good news; the bad news was that we were not allowed to leave the bus! So, we leaned out of the windows and photographed whatever we could when the bus stopped. Eventually we came to the Orange or Gariiep River, which forms the boundary between Namibia and South Africa. In the afternoon we climbed another steep hill, Kortdoorn (short thorn), to see the incredible number of different succulents

growing there, plus some bulbs and blooming annuals (this was Spring, remember). The most interesting succulent was the tiny and highly desirable *Aloe krapohlina* var. *dumoulinii*, only two or three inches across.

We were now getting into the Richtersveld, a small area full of interesting succulents with the Orange River to its north, the Atlantic Ocean to its west, and the town of Steinkopf more or less at its southeast corner. We spent two nights in the guesthouse at Richtersveld National Park, a pleasant place with a view of the Orange River and vervet monkeys in the trees outside. This is a region for seeing *Pachypodium namaquensis*, a fabulous plant which was second in interest to me only to the welwitschias.

There was a morning excursion to Helskloof to see *Aloe pearsonii*, but I did not go because I was not feeling well at the time. We visited the type locality (Cornell's Kop) of *Aloe pillansii*, looking a lot like *Aloe dichotoma* (which we had been seeing lots of), but with one major difference: the inflorescence of the *Aloe pillansii* hangs down instead of growing upward. We also saw a large number of *Aloe ramosissima*, which also look very similar to *Aloe dichotoma*, but with multiple branches beginning near the ground. On we went to Springbok, a town at the eastern edge of the area called Namaqualand, whence come all those succulents labelled "namaquensis." Near Springbok we viewed large plants of *Euphorbia multiceps*, a highly desirable euphorbia that is unbranched and more or less cone-shaped. They were covered with either flowers or unripe seed.

An excursion to the Skilpad Nature Reserve followed. Although the wild flowers there were past their prime, they were still very numerous and lovely, comparable to the best shows we get in our deserts in a good wild-flower year.

Then we went on to the Knersvlakte, a region for which the term "desert pavement" could have been coined; the ground was covered with small bits of white quartz as far as the eye could see. It was the habitat of many mesembs, including three kinds of conophytum, *Argyroderma delaetii*, and a *Monilaria* species that looked like an untidy sea anemone. Many of the larger mesembs were in bloom. Even those of us who live daily with "ice plant" could hardly conceive of the immense quantity of species and varieties. We were all impressed with the brilliant flowers in many colors that grow in southern Africa.

We were moving on south, a short distance inland from the Atlantic. At Vanrhynsdorp we visited a nice succulent nursery and enjoyed an excellent slide show of gorgeous wild flowers and South African mountain scenery. The next day we traveled over a mountain pass (in increasingly stormy weather) and visited the historic town of Tulbagh (remember the bulb *Tulbaghia*? It was named for the same person, an early governor), which was full of handsome historic buildings in the colonial Dutch style. Now we were in the region referred to as the Ceres Karoo, and visited the Karoo Botanic Garden in Worcester.

Finally we arrived in Cape Town—Table Mountain was enshrouded in clouds—where we were housed in a very nice ocean-front apartment hotel. Dorothy and I had a good-sized suite with a full,

modern kitchen. We visited a beach that had been taken over by South African or jackass penguins, to the dismay of the people living nearby; penguins are cute but they make a lot of noise and odor. They were not at all shy, and let us admire them for quite some time. (They have since been deported to some other place on the coastline, but what's to keep them from returning if they want to?) Then on to the Cape itself, which is a Nature Reserve, complete with gift shops and hordes of tourists (like us) arriving in buses (like us). You could escape the crowds by getting away from the busy center, which reminded me a lot of the visitor center at Anza-Borrego Park during wild-flower season. At lunchtime, our bus took us a short distance away to a place on the ocean that was just like a rock garden, covered with plants in bloom, notably *Euphorbia caput-medusae* and many wild flowers, as well as, two species of *tylectodon*.

Our last morning in South Africa took us to breakfast at the Kirstenbosch Gardens, a lovely place that we really did not get to explore very much owing to our having to catch an early plane. We did get to tour the new, unfinished conservatory, led by Ernst van Jaarsveld, its curator.

We endured—you can't really enjoy it—the long trip home, our luggage heavier on account of the rocks neither of us could resist picking up, and several new books. It was a great trip!

BY AIRMAIL - PER LUGPOS - PAR AVION

RSA 35c
RSA 50c

Succulenta '90

Michael & Joyce Buckner
4822 Santa Monica Avenue, #103
San Diego, California
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Last month we learned that Gilbert Tegelberg Jr passed away on February 19th after a long struggle with bone cancer. His passing sadly marks the end of an era - an era of simpler times — times which seem more wholesome - more veritable. This month we discovered an article in OPEN GATES, newsletter of the Gates Cactus & Succulent Society (San Bernardino), that was written by Gil Tegelberg last year and originally published in *The Cactus Growers Newsletter*. We enjoyed the article and hope you will too!

HOW TEGELBERG CACTUS GARDENS WAS STARTED IN 1921 BY GILBERT H. TEGELBERG JR.

It started when my mother and father were married on June 1, 1921. They lived in San Diego, California for a short time and then bought a chicken ranch in Inglewood, California. At that time Inglewood was a chicken colony and farms. My father had cactus when he was a small boy on the farm in Iowa. He talked his mother into buying some out of the spring catalogue, so he had cactus in the early 1900's. He had a lot of interesting jobs when he was growing up before World War I. He had an uncle who was a banker and had a section of land fenced with heavy planks to raise American Bison. They were trying to breed cattle with the Bison to improve the meat. This was one of the first attempts to do this.

My father then went to Michigan to work in a copper mine in the upper peninsula when the ceiling fell in and just missed him. He quit that job and moved to Minnesota and worked on a dredging project near the small town of Roosevelt in 1916. He then went to Canada to work on a large wheat ranch. When World War I started, he went to Spokane, Washington and enlisted in the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. He ended up in the Balloon Corps and went to France to fight Germany. He was shot at many times, but they missed him. He was gassed with mustard gas so he was sent to a hospital in Cannes, France to recover from the gas. The hospital was a large hotel and had a large cactus garden in front of it. Here he renewed his interest in cactus and vowed to grow cactus when he got home. He was in the hospital until after the war.

In 1919, he and his younger brother spent a year in Imperial Valley on a dairy farm that was for sale. It was too hot, so they did not buy it.

He then went to live in San Diego for a short time. My mother and her mother and father moved from Iowa in 1920 and built a two story house in Los Angeles. My mother and father were married on June 1, 1921 in Los Angeles. Shortly after that, they bought the ranch in Inglewood and grew chickens and succulent plants during the Great Depression. They could not sell their chickens and eggs, but they were selling succulent plants so they went full time into the nursery. About this time a relative came to live with us and work with us; he was a great asset to the nursery. He could plant seedlings faster than anyone I have ever seen. I was born on September 5, 1924 and grew up on the ranch and nursery, and worked on it off and on until World War II when I went full-time. My grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Carl A. Edgran, lived next door and grew plants for us too.

In 1930, my father homesteaded 320 acres in Lucerne Valley and started to grow *Opuntia erinacea* and *Opuntia ramosissima* from cuttings by the tens of thousands, as they were native to this area and grew fast. In 1932 he became sick and was in the hospital for six months. When he got out, he went to the desert to get well, and he did. My mother and August Tegelberg and grandparents kept the nursery going until he got well.

His doctor told him to throw away the frying pan,

so he went up a canyon in the mountains called Rattlesnake Canyon and worked a gold claim. He lived off and on for a year at this claim. All the food he ate came out of that frying pan, and he lived until he was 85.

Once he was well, he grew more cactus seedlings than anyone for many years. In 1938 Howard Gates and he went to Baja California to collect seed that he could not obtain here. This seed lasted many years. Then in 1952 I went with Howard Gates to Baja California to collect seed. And in 1953 he and Howard Gates went to Mexico to collect seed and any new plants they could find. This is when my father found *Mammillaria tegelbergiana* in southern Mexico.

After World War II, the smog got so bad in Inglewood that we started to look for a new place to move to. We did not find any we liked, so in 1958 we moved to Lucerne Valley, California and our plants grew better than ever — good sod and water and sunshine. I would still be growing plants now if I had not come down with bone cancer in December of 1991. I am in remission now, but I am too weak to work anymore.

I wish to thank Clark Moorten of Palm Springs, California and Bill LaHaye of Big Bear City, California and my cousin Stanley Tegelberg of Lucerne Valley, California for all the help they have given me, for which I could never repay them.

Through the years my father made many fine hybrids of cactus and other succulents. The one grown the most was *Gastrohaworthia* - "Royal Highness". We had a large field of them in Inglewood and could never grow enough. I would say there has been million of them sold as other nurseries grew them also by the tens of thousands. He found *Mammillaria tegelbergiana* in 1953. We grew as many as we could, as it is a nice looking white spined *Mammillaria*. During this time he noted that the flower and seed of *Leuchtenbergia princeps* and *Ferocactus acanthodes* were similar in looks and so he began to hybridized them and grow seedlings from all this work came "*X Ferobergia* Gil Tegelberg".

In 1930 he found a small *Dudleya* in the Ord Mountains of the Lucerne Valley, California. He showed it to a lot of botanist friends through the years, but could get no one to help him publish it. Mr. Paul H. Thomson of Bonsall, California came to me in 1991 and wanted to know about the *Dudleya* in the desert. So I told him about them and when he discovered that I had a new species that had never been published before, he wanted to publish it in his new book - *The Dudleya and Hasseanthus Handbook*. This is the third plant named after my father.

I know he had other plants to be published, like *Myrtillocactus tegelbergii* that was found by my father and Howard Gates in 1938 in Baja California, Mexico. We will leave these to future botanists to find out where they are. Between 1930 and 1941, and 1946 to 1970 he would go on trips whenever he could to botanize plants in the western U.S.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CONNOISSEUR COLLECTOR

BY STAN YALOF

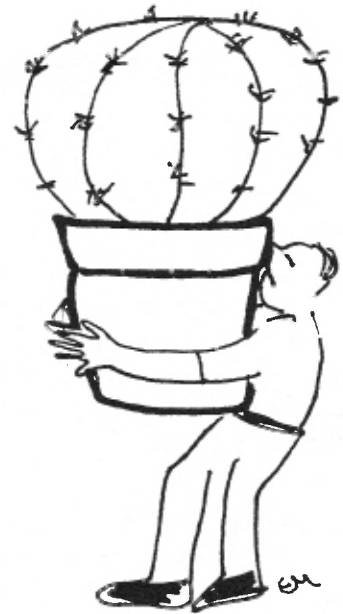
Dedication — Rick Latimer handed me a newspaper article on collecting. A few hours later he died of accidental causes. I came to know Rick during a motorhome trip that same summer to the CSSA Convention in Tucson. As we drove home, we discussed the whys of buying the various succulent plants that we had acquired for ourselves and our friends; agaves and crests for Alex, a euphorbia for Reese's collection, lithops and tiny bizarre mesembs for Betty, etc. We tried to analyze why different plants turned us on . . . differently. What was the beauty of an abnormality, such as a crest? What attracts us to these plants? To a succulent society? To a particular species, or deformity, or a specific trait? To understand this, we need to understand the collecting urge. Could the reason for collecting stem not so much from the object collected, but instead from a passion for collecting? Is there a common thread that strings all collectaholics together? What makes a collectable beautiful? And at what point does this passion to amass specific objects turn into a mania — a personality disorder?

I decided to look into these concepts a little further. I began with a search of the books and periodicals listed in the references of the newspaper article. None told the whole story; most were entertaining, listing and detailing collectibles; the most informative discussed collecting with respect to art. My research resulted in an eleven page article (*which the editors chose not to reprint in its totality!*). In writing this article I surprised myself in barely mentioning succulent plants, covering instead what I believe are the underpinnings of the collecting urge. I offer this article (*published portion actually more closely resembles a poem*) in memory of slyly humorous, gentle, and scholarly Rick.

Collecting Becomes Us

We are born with some instincts
Equipment for acquiring needs
And must communicate to get them.
Otherwise a blank page.
We cannot catch fish. We must get others to do that for us.
To acquire and survive, we must swim through people
To get others to supply us,
To communicate, and to belong. We must be fed.
Not only food.
But also **Language, Attitudes, Myths, Biases, and Styles.**

We can go further.
Select and acquire.
A bit of this and that.
Shows something about who we are.
A bit becomes a pile.
A sorted pile is a collection.
Many collections make a group.
A group with a library is a learned society.
The more the merrier.
I saw a guy wearing antlers with dangling bells.
One person with antlers equals weirdo.
Many are a society.
Societies beget members — and from them will pop specialties
And specialties from the specialties,
And scholars, curators, explorers, and learning centers will arise
Bestowing value to collector and collection.
Art's artifice becomes reality.
Collecting goes with possession.
Born blank, fed myths, develop tastes, acquire art, collect piles of this and that.
Analyze and specialize, scholasticize, intensify, catalog,
Find and make beauty.
What we do: our work, our possessions, our play, our collections all reflect on us.
Born blank, we become individuals.

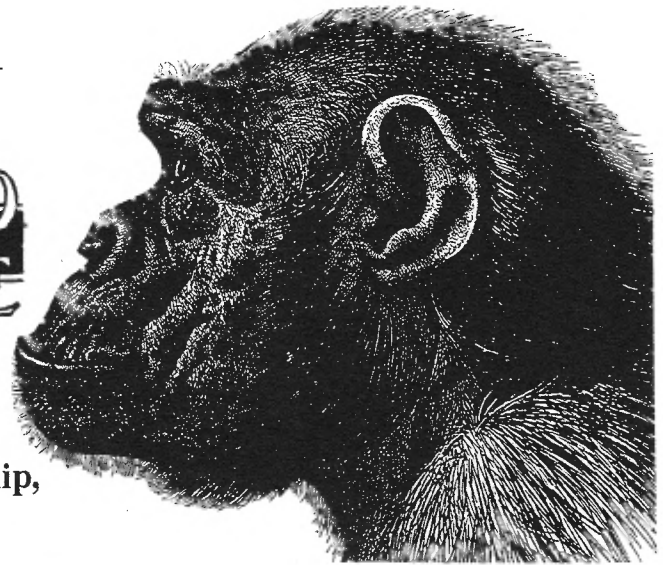


WE ALL LIVE DOWN STREAM

Bumpersticker seen in Ocean Beach

WISE AND OTHERWISE

By Michael Buckner



**We did not all come over on the same ship,
but we are all in the same boat.**

— Bernard Baruch

A surprising spectrum of native invertebrates pollinates crop plants: midges, blowflies, soldier flies, syrphid flower flies, hawk-moths, nitidulid beetles, checkered beetles, ladybird beetles, fig wasps, sphecid and vespidae wasps, sweat bees, squash and gourd bees, carpenter bees, andrenid bees, bumblebees, mason bees, leafcutter bees, and cactus-loving bees. Other crops are pollinated by a range of wild vertebrates, from nectar-feeding bats and opossums to perching birds such as orchard orioles, yellow-winged tanagers, singing blackbirds, brown jays, and golden-fronted woodpeckers. If such a diversity of wild pollinators is essential to the health and wealth of our agriculture—and that is an inescapable fact—why do so few people in the United States and elsewhere recognize that native animals are making significant contributions to crop ecosystems in general or to pollination in particular?

Habitat fragmentation immediately reduces the sizes of species populations, increases their isolation, surrounds them in a matrix consisting of a new environment such as agricultural fields or [urban] development, and commonly changes their environment. . . . [It] is often considered to be one of the greatest threats to terrestrial biodiversity. . . . All available evidence shows that pollinator abundance and diversity decline with fragmentation.

Beverly Rathcke & Eric Jules, University of Michigan.

The phenomenon of disappearing bees and diminishing plant reproduction has attracted enough attention that it has been given a name: the Allee effect. When a population's size drops below a certain threshold, it can no longer support its ecological associates and it will lose its viability. First elucidated among the microscopic organisms known as rotifers by the pioneering ecologist W. C. Allee, the principle clearly applies to rare plants that cannot sustain pollinators or seed dispersers necessary for the regeneration of their populations. Unless there is rapid selection for rare mutants that allow some other form of reproduction—self-pollination as occurs in peanuts or vegetative cloning like potatoes—the population of a plant will die out once its attendant pollinating animals have been removed.

Figs have been called keystone mutualists of tropical forests—a keystone is the one that holds the arch together. The idea here is that if you pulled out the keystones, it would be disastrous for many of the animals that rely on them. . . . This could happen, for instance, due to the selective logging of the trees upon which strangler figs establish themselves. Or, by spraying insecticides, you wipe out wasps, which in time will cause their fig tree hosts to decline or possibly go extinct since the trees won't be able to rely upon any other local pollinators. They must rely upon the very highly specialized fig wasps for their reproductive success. Both mutualists are locked in an intricate evolutionary dance and cannot change partners. . . . It's assumed that populations would crash if figs or their obligate mutualist pollinators were wiped out. If this happened, cascading extinctions would be expected. One would assume that obligate parasites of the mutualism would go extinct, and monkeys would radically shift their diets or starve. With few animals feeding on fig fruits and seeds, perhaps there would be reduced food for predators such as raptors and jaguars. This isn't a trivial example but a very real threat due to tropical deforestation.

Judith Bronstein, 1994, "Animal/Plant Interactions." Ecology & Evolutionary Dept. Univ. of AZ, Tucson.

All four paragraphs above from **The Forgotten Pollinators**, by Stephen L. Buchmann & Gary Paul Nabhan; 1996, Island Press / Shearwater Books, Covelo CA.

The Navajo have a strong feeling for plants, which they treat with the greatest respect. The symbol for life and productivity, for peace and prosperity, is pollen. Pollen symbolizes light.

— Stephen C. Jett, "Navajo Wildlands," 1967



**WISE AND
OTHERWISE**

NATURE CANNOT BE CHANGED

One day, a rabbit and a monkey were engaged in conversation. However, while talking, each of them constantly indulged in his own bad habit. The monkey, of course, kept scratching himself with his paw, while the rabbit, constantly fearing to be attacked by an enemy, kept turning his head about in all directions. The two animals were unable to keep still.

"It's really amazing," said the rabbit to the monkey, "that you cannot stop scratching yourself for a moment."

"It's not more amazing than to see you turn your head constantly for no good reason," replied the monkey.

"Oh, I could easily stop doing that," said the rabbit, "if I only wanted to."

"Very well! Let's see if you can. Let's both try, you and I, to keep still. The one who moves first, will lose the bet."

The rabbit agreed. And so they both watched to see if the other moved.

* * *

Soon the situation became unbearable for both of them. The monkey itched all over. Never in his life had he itched so badly. The rabbit, on the other hand, was sure that some enemy was going to jump on him from behind.

Finally when he could stand it no longer, the rabbit said, "Our bet did not provide that we could not tell each other stories to pass the time; did it?"

"It did not," answered the monkey, foreseeing some ruse on the part of the rabbit but intending to use the same trickery himself.

"All right then, I'll start," said the rabbit. "Imagine, one day when I was in an open field, I was in terrible danger . . ."

"Curiously enough the same thing happened to me one day," interrupted the monkey.

"Oh really?" continued the rabbit, "I saw dogs jumping through the field in all directions. They came from the left, from the right, from the front, from behind. I turned my head this way, that way, . . . you see? Like this . . ." And as if to illustrate his point the rabbit turned his head in all the directions he had indicated in his story.

Of course the monkey too had a story to tell. "That day," he said, "I was tormented by a group of children who kept throwing stones at me. They threw one here, and another there . . ." And with each place he mentioned in the story, he gave himself a good thump with his paw to stop the itching.

The rabbit who well understood the subterfuge, burst out laughing, and said to his companion, "Let us be frank. As much as we would like to, we cannot change our natures. This proves it. Neither of us has won the bet, nor lost it."

— Sierra Leone from **AFRICAN FOLK TALES**. 1963, edited by Charlotte & Wolf Leslau, The Peter Pauper Press, Mt. Vernon, NY.

Every point in the cosmos can be considered its center.

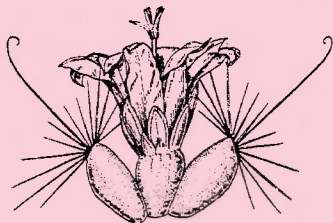
— Dorothy Maclean

**When we pay attention to Nature's music,
We find that everything on the earth contributes to its harmony.**

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