

Espinas y Flores

BULLETIN OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY, INC.

VOLUME XXVII NUMBER TWELVE, SATURDAY DECEMBER 12, 1992

Season's Greetings

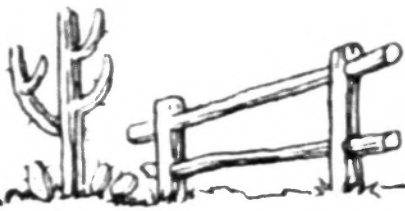


HOLIDAY
PARTY

Happy New Year

NEW MEMBERS - WELCOME!!!

DENNIS SHARMAHD
NANCY EIDER
DOUGLAS & BETSY BUCKNER



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP EARLY

MEMBERSHIP: LAURA DE MERRITT, 619-571-5127. DUES ARE \$10.00 FOR SINGLE MEMBERSHIP AND \$5.00 FOR EACH ADDITIONAL MEMBER OF SAME HOUSEHOLD (ONE ESPINAS y FLORES MAILED). CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO S.D.C. & S.S. AND MAILED TO P.O. BOX 33181, HILLCREST STATION-102, SAN DIEGO, CA. 92163-3181.

MEETING TIME: MEETINGS ARE HELD THE SECOND SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH (EXCEPT FOR JUNE & DECEMBER) AT 1:30 pm IN ROOM 101 - MAJORICA ROOM, CASA DEL PRADO, BALBOA PARK. COME EARLY FOR PLANT, CONTAINER & SUPPLY SALES AND SOCIALIZING. BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD AT NOON PRIOR TO GENERAL MEETING.

We are all looking forward to the New Year and another year of friendship and learning experiences. Please contribute what you can to make our organization a continuing success. We wish you all a warm and peaceful holiday season and a prosperous New Year ... Now, jut let it rain

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH MEETING
BEGINS AT 12:00 NOON
HOLIDAY DINNER TO BE SERVED AT 1:00**

NOVEMBER BRAG TABLE WINNERS

FIRST: Michael Buckner's Bonsal *Cussonia spicata*

SECOND: Dylan Hannon's *Pelargonium cortusifolium*

THIRD: Dorothy Larberg's *Ariocarpus trigonus*

HONORABLE MENTION: Phyllis Flechsig's *Lachenalla viridiflora*
(a beautiful green-blue flowering bulb)

DEADLINE FOR JANUARY ISSUE IS DECEMBER 20TH - EARLY!!

NOMINATIONS FOR 1993-1994 OFFICERS ARE:

PRESIDENT: JOEY BETZLER
VICE-PRESIDENT: MICHAEL BUCKNER
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**THIS ISSUE DEDICATED TO ELINOR LATIMER,
DORIS RAKE AND EDMUNDO MAIO, MEMBERS
MISSED AND IN OUR THOUGHTS**

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

PROGRAM FOR DECEMBER: HAPPY HOLIDAYS
ELECTION OF OFFICERS
DINNER PROMPTLY @ 1:00 PM
SPECIAL PLANT EXCHANGE
SIGN UP OF VOLUNTEERS FOR EDUCATION & REFRESHMENTS
DISTRIBUTION OF GIFT PLANTS TO MEMBERS
MINI-AUCTION
NO LIBRARY AND NO PLANT SALES



**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH MEETING BEGINS
AT 12:00 NOON - DINNER TO BE SERVED AT 1:00**

DECEMBER HOLIDAY MEETING & DINNER PARTY STARTS AT NOON. WE WILL HAVE OUR HOLIDAY GIFT EXCHANGE - IF YOU HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED BEFORE, IT WORKS LIKE THIS:

ANY MEMBER OR GUEST MAY PARTICIPATE; ALL YOU DO IS BRING IN A CACTUS OR SUCCULENT PLANT WHICH IS DESIRABLE. IT SHOULD BE IN GOOD CONDITION AND NICELY POTTED. INCLUDE A LABEL THAT IDENTIFIES THE PLANT ON ONE SIDE AND HAS YOUR NAME ON THE OTHER SIDE. THE FIRST PLANT TO BE SELECTED WILL BE AUCTIONED OFF AT THE END OF MEETING. THE PERSON WHO BROUGHT IN THE FIRST SELECTION GETS FIRST CHOICE FROM ALL REMAINING PLANTS. WHENEVER A PLANT IS SELECTED, THE PERSON WHO BROUGHT IT GETS THE NEXT CHOICE, SO THE MORE APPEALING THE PLANT THAT YOU BRING IN THE EARLIER YOU WILL GET YOUR CHANCE AT THE "GEMS". PLEASE, ONE PLANT PER PERSON. WHAT A TERRIFIC WAY TO GIVE, RECEIVE, AND BROADEN YOUR PLANT COLLECTION ALL AT THE SAME TIME!!



POINSETTIAS: EARLY HISTORY AND VARIETIES

"*Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd., the poinsettia, is a member of the botanical family *Euphorbiacea* said to have been named for King Juba's physician. The genus *Euphorbia* is large, containing some 700 to 1000 species. It is characterized by a single female flower, without petals and usually without sepals, which is surrounded by individual male flowers all enclosed in a cup-shaped structure called a cyathium. Upon the cyathium, one to four or more glands are borne.

The showy red portion of the plant, popularly referred to as the flower, consists of modified leaves or bracts. While each individual leaf is correctly a bract, common usage has designated the entire showy portion as the bract or bracts.

Other members of the same genus are such plants as scarlet plume, *E. fulgens*; snow-on-the-mountain, *E. marginata*; crown of thorns, *E. splendens*; *E. epithymoides*, known commonly as *E. polychroma* and many other commonly seen succulents.

While the poinsettia is the symbol of Christmas in many parts of the world now, it was cultivated by the Aztecs in Mexico before Christianity came to the Western Hemisphere. The plant, native to the area near present day Taxco, was called Cuetlaxochitl by the Indians. Because of its brilliant color, the flower was a symbol of purity. It was highly prized by Kings Netzahualcoyotl and Moctezuma, but because of climate could not be grown in their capital, which is now Mexico City.

The Indians also had practical uses for the plant. A reddish purple dye was made from the bracts. From the latex, a medicinal preparation was made. It was used to counteract fever.

During the Seventeenth Century, a group of Franciscan priests settled near Taxco. Because of its color and holiday blooming time, they began to use the flower in the Fiesta of Santa Pesebre, a nativity procession. This custom was described by Don Hernando Ruiz de Alarcon, in a letter to his brother, Spanish playwright Don Juan Ruiz de Alarcon. Don Hernando was a resident of Taxco at the time.

Juan Balme, a botanist of the same period, mentioned the plant in his writings. He described it as having large green leaves, and a small flower surrounded by bracts, almost as if to protect it. The bracts, he said, turned a brilliant red. Balme also found the plant flourishing on the slopes and in the valleys near Cuernavaca.

Poinsettias were first introduced into the United States in 1825 by Joel Robert Poinsett. While serving as the first United States ambassador to Mexico, he had occasion to visit Taxco, and found the flowers growing on the adjacent hillsides. Poinsett, a botanist of great ability, had some plants sent to his home in Greenville, South Carolina.

After supplying his own greenhouses, he distributed plants to some botanical gardens and to some horticultural friends, including John Bartram of Philadelphia. Bartram, in turn, supplied the plant to Robert Buist, a nurseryman, who first sold the plant as *Euphorbia poinsettia*. The botanical name had already been given by a German taxonomist in 1833 as *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. ex Klotz. of the Spurge family of *Euphorbiaceae*. The name poinsettia, however, has remained the accepted name in the English speaking countries. . . .

The modern era of poinsettia culture really starts with the introduction of the seedling variety OAK LEAF. This seedling was reported to have been grown originally in Jersey City, New Jersey by a Mrs. Enteman in 1923. From 1923 until the early 1960's all of the principal varieties of any commercial importance were selections of sports from this original OAK LEAF seedling, most of them having been selected and developed by Paul Ecke of Encinitas, California."

from THE POINSETTIA MANUAL published by Paul Ecke, Jr, Paul Ecke Poinsettias, Encinitas, CA c.1971



HAPPY NEW YEAR



THE POISONOUS POINSETTIA MYTH

"The poinsettia poison myth had its origin in 1919 when a two-year-old child of an Army officer stationed in Hawaii died of poisoning, and the cause was incorrectly assumed to be poinsettia leaf.

Tests come up clean: Research conducted at Ohio State University determined that the poinsettia plant is not toxic. Results of this project published in 1971 concluded that the poinsettia is not harmful to either people or animals. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports that while certain popular houseplants can be toxic, and some are actually poisonous, the poinsettia is absolutely harmless.

Impressive track record: The Poison Control Center of the Food and Drug Administration monitors information from 500 reporting Centers in 50 states. The Center reports that to their knowledge, no one has ever been known to be hospitalized or treated for poisoning as the result of ingesting any part of the poinsettia plant.

Government clearance: The U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission determined that the poinsettia should not be required to carry a "warning label" in a statement issued December 19, 1975. This recommendation was based on their investigation in which no evidence was found to support the poinsettia poison myth. The Commission did suggest, however, that the poinsettia should be considered a non-food substance which if eaten could cause some discomfort."

from THE MEXICAN PET by Jan Harold Brunvand, Penquin Books Canada Ltd, c.1986

HOLIDAY PARTY RESERVATIONS!



PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: S.D.C. & S.S.
SEND TO: MRS. LAURA DEMERRITT C/O SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 33181 HILLCREST STATION - 102
SAN DIEGO, CA 92163-3181

DEAR LAURA,
YES! PLEASE RESERVE CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR MEMBERS @ \$7.50 EACH:

MEMBER NAME _____

MEMBER NAME _____

PLEASE RESERVE CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR GUESTS @ \$10.00 (SORRY, NO GIFT)

GUEST NAME _____

GUEST NAME _____

I WISH TO ATTEND MEETING & RECEIVE GIFT PLANT, BUT PREFER NOT TO HAVE DINNER

MEMBER NAME _____



HOLIDAY BUFFET MENU

ROAST TURKEY WITH SAGE DRESSING
MASHED POTATOES WITH GIBLET GRAVY
HOT BUTTERED CORN
TOSSED GREEN SALAD WITH TOMATOES & TWO DRESSINGS
RELISH TRAY INCLUDING FRESH VEGETABLES
CRANBERRY SAUCE
ROLLS AND BUTTER
COFFEE, TEA, FRUIT PUNCH OR WINE
APPLE OR PUMPKIN PIE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH MEETING BEGINS AT 12:00
NOON - HOLIDAY DINNER TO BE SERVED AT 1:00



CYLINDRO-PUNTIA TENEBROSA

The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society

JOIN US

The San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society is a non-profit, hobby organization created to stimulate interest in succulent plants. This society brings together people (and plants) with a common interest for the purpose of educating the public about the beauty and uniqueness of these remarkable plants, encouraging proper collecting and maintenance of the plants through preservation of native habitats and horticultural propagation, and to foster good fellowship. You are invited to join our society, whether you are an expert, amateur, or beginner, who loves unusual plants and flowers. VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME. BRING AN INTERESTED FRIEND.

Regular meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park at 1:30 p.m. (One may come as early as noon just to socialize or obtain a parking space easily.) Annual dues are \$10.00 for a single membership with an additional \$5.00 for each additional member at the same mailing address. The dues are payable at time of joining, and January of each succeeding year. Members receive our monthly publication Espinas y Flores, are entitled to library check-out privileges, and may partake in our many field trips and other activities. We offer knowledgeable speakers at our programs; many are world renowned scholars, botanists, explorers and authorities. We have a number of shows each year, especially our Annual Show and Plant Sale in June. We have a wide range of plants and supplies for purchase at favorable costs at most meetings. We also have a plant exchange table and monthly door prizes. All members will be consistently encouraged to contribute and participate in our many functions. Please join us and help us grow.

MAIL TO: MRS. LAURA DE MERRITT, TREASURER
P.O. BOX 33181-HILLCREST STATION, S.D., CA 92163-3181

MEMBER NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ALL 9 NUMBERS OF YOUR ZIP CODE PLEASE! _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

PLEASE LIST ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS:

_____ \$5.00

_____ \$5.00

WELCOME

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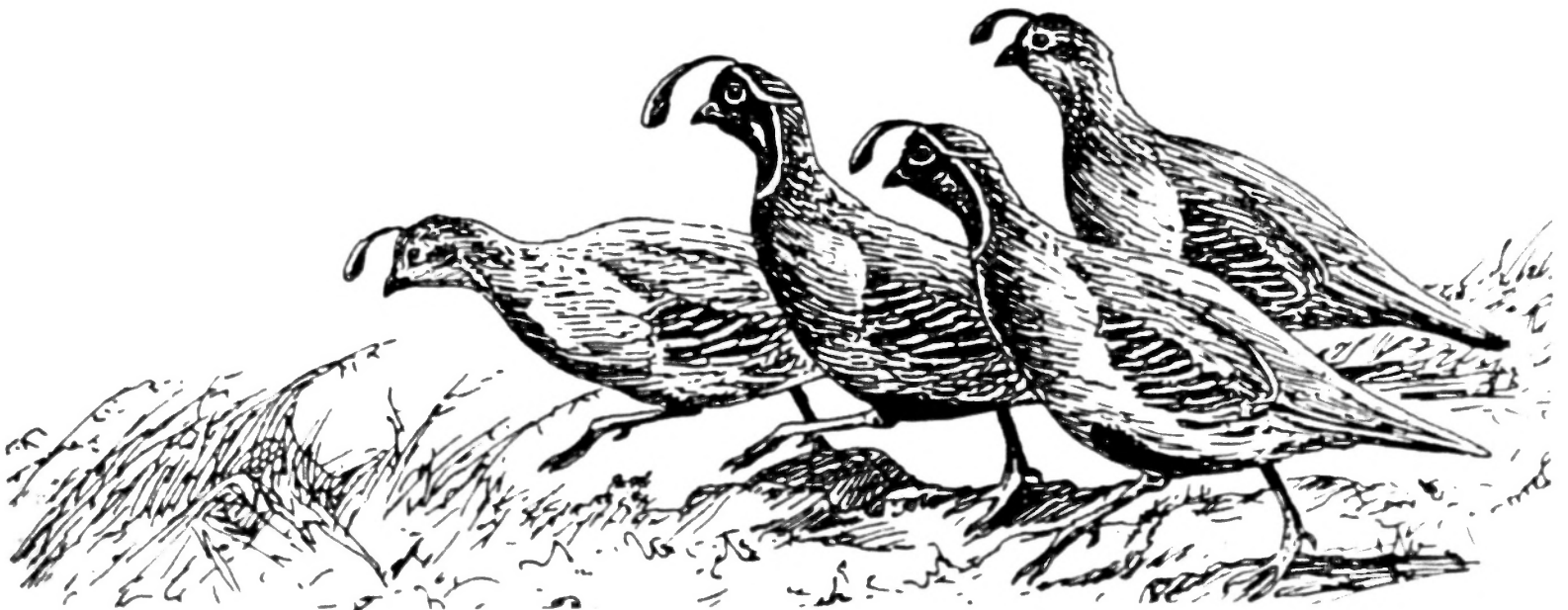
SCIENTISTS URGE REAUTHORIZATION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

(The following, dated 7 Apr '92, originated at the 22nd Congress of the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study (IOS) in Phoenix, AZ.)

At a press conference, representatives from several international conservation organizations voiced their endorsement for the renewal and strengthening of the U S Endangered Species Act, in light of disturbing new notices of plant and animal vulnerability presented at a special symposium, "The Conservation of Mutualisms". In report after report yesterday, scientists documented the limited seed set and reproductive success of succulent plants, due to the decline or rarity of these plants' co-evolved pollinators. With cacti and with other succulents, whether pollinated by bats or by native bees, from the Colorado Plateau to volcanic habitats in central Mexico, a variety of organisms are under increasing risk of serious long-term decline. Although succulent plants are seldom dependent upon a single pollinator or seed dispenser, the scientists clarified that they remain concerned that such ecological relations have not been given the attention they deserve. Lack of funding for collaborative efforts between botanists and zoologists has slowed the accumulation of research results that could confirm or deny whether the decline of a pollinator is affecting a rare plant, or vice-versa. As a result, scientists from several organizations fear that we will continue to lose biological diversity until environmental problems affecting multiple species are dealt with.

In the United States, there are over 150 species and subspecies of cacti and succulents of concern to the Center for Plant Conservation, because they are either naturally rare, or have undergone rapid drops in population sizes. In Mexico, there are 115 cacti and succulents considered to be rare, threatened or endangered by the government, and many more that have received inadequate attention. Because pollinators which migrate between Mexico and the US may be required by some of these succulents in order to sustain healthy levels of reproduction, long-term conservation of both plants and animals will require international support and coordination.

One immediate need is for reauthorization of the US Endangered Species Act, which deals with organisms at risk of extinction in the US, as well as with endangered species unique to other countries. Two of the organizations present, the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study (IOS) and the Species Survival Commission, Cacti and Succulent Specialists Group, endorse HR 4045, an ESA amendment proposal sponsored by Representative Gerry Studds and 45 other Congressmen. It promotes habitat conservation and invests in rehabilitating rare species rather than simply listing them as endangered forever. More importantly, it allows for government agencies to develop recovery plans for multiple species, which is exactly what is needed to help certain plants and their pollinators regain their former numbers.



"Unless the US can show other countries that endangered species legislation remains an essential tool for conserving biodiversity", warns researcher Dr Gary Nabham, "our leadership and sincerity in the global conservation arena will come under question."

Representatives of the Species Survival Commission, Bat Conservation International, Center for Plant Conservation, The International Organization for Succulent Plant Study, and the Desert Botanical Garden offered additional perspectives on endangered species issues. Asked what role the CSSA could play in the problem, Dr Ted Anderson, President of the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study which is composed of members from 25 nations replied that the IOS is establishing Affiliate status for organizations such as CSSA to join their efforts. Dr George Rabb, Director of the Species Survival Commission (and Director of Chicago's Brookfield Zoo) hoped that CSSA could feed ideas on how to improve the situation, "no matter how far out", to the IOS. Dr Gary Nabham suggested urging our members to write their congressional delegation supporting reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act.

SCIENTISTS URGE REAUTHORIZATION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Keep the Act Intact

"The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: what good is it?"

—Aldo Leopold

To protect the Endangered Species Act, write to your members of Congress and urge them to co-sponsor H.R. 4045, introduced by Rep. Gerry Studds (D-Mass.). Write to your senators and urge them to co-sponsor a measure to reauthorize the Endangered Species Act, to be introduced by Sen. Max Baucus, (D-Mont.).

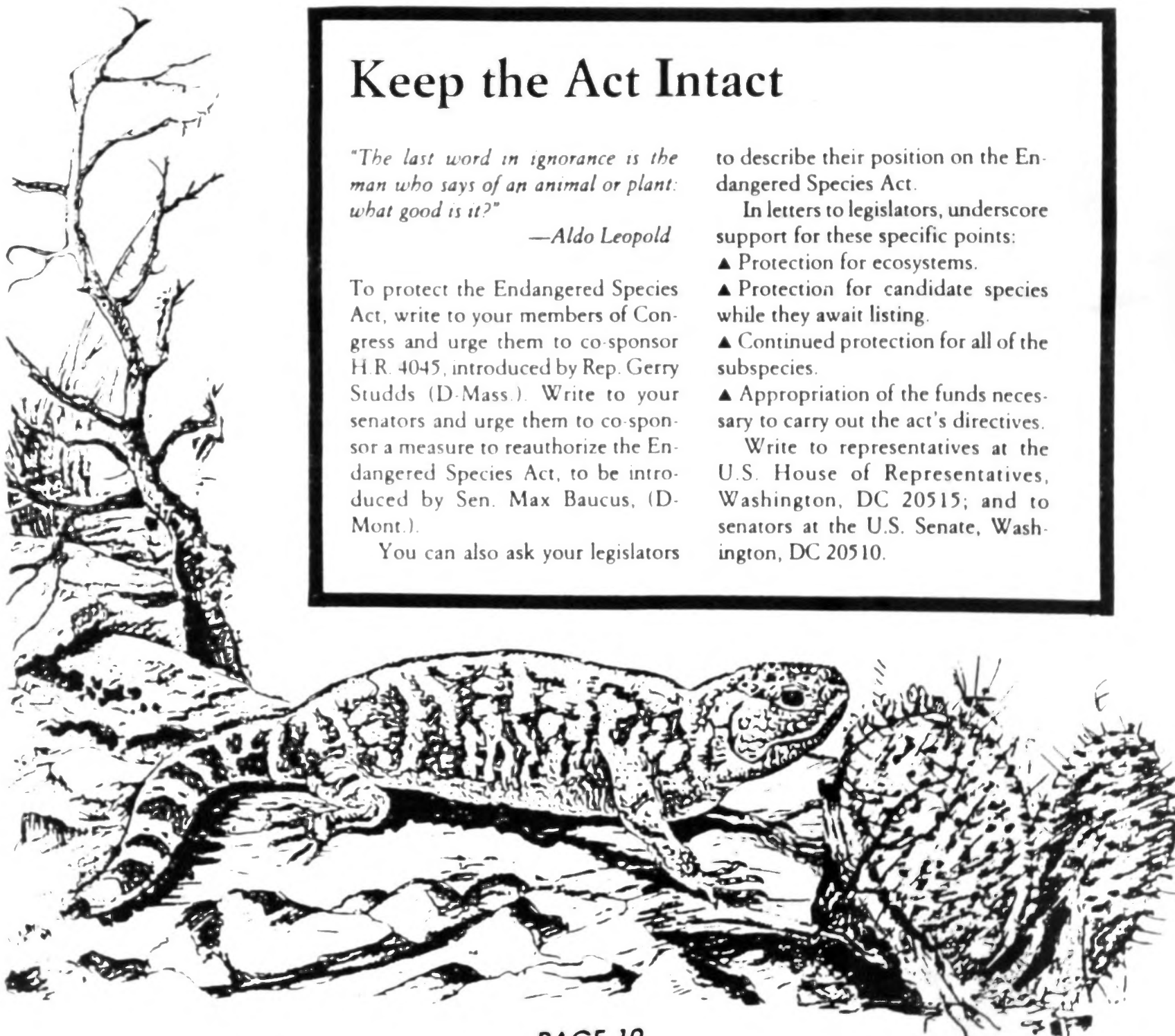
You can also ask your legislators

to describe their position on the Endangered Species Act.

In letters to legislators, underscore support for these specific points:

- ▲ Protection for ecosystems.
- ▲ Protection for candidate species while they await listing.
- ▲ Continued protection for all of the subspecies.
- ▲ Appropriation of the funds necessary to carry out the act's directives.

Write to representatives at the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515; and to senators at the U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.



"IT WAS A GREAT YEAR FOR CACTUS"

by Brunhilde Scheffler

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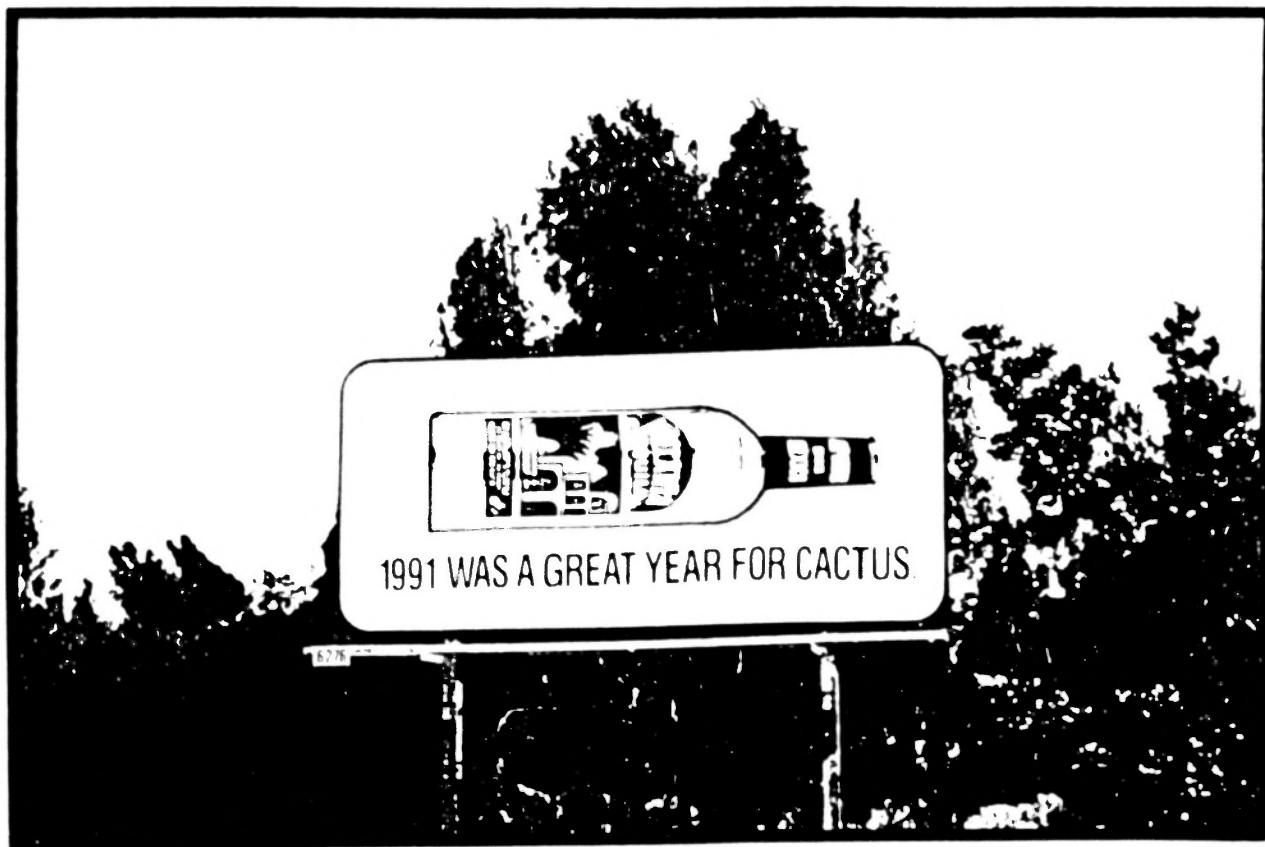
I just wonder! Do you think of a cactus when you imbibe a margarita? Or when you admire the beautiful silver-leafed agave, do you taste tequila? As we all know Tequila (agave) - Marguerita and the cactus are closely associated.

When I drove home on Mission Boulevard in Escondido the other day I did not have alcohol on my mind, nor did I think of cacti. Mission Boulevard was all dug up, under construction, confusing. Then I saw it: "IT WAS A GREAT YEAR FOR CACTUS" Big letters. Big billboard.

Only the word cactus registered in my mind, which is the way it should be for a cactus aficionado, right? Traffic was heavy behind me. I slowed down anyway, and looked again. Almost drove into a ditch! It was not from being intoxicated, but realizing that they, whoever they are, meant booze.

I stopped the car (I think it was a male driver who honked behind me .. anxious to get to his favorite watering hole!). I stepped out of my car and walked into the construction ditch on foot. I had to do this order to get a good position for composition of my picture. Oh, yes, I was going to photograph that cactus and booze bottle - a good work of art.

I bet you, the traffickers going by must have thought: "What is she doing in her high heels walking over these dirt piles?" I am a mind reader. But anyway, as you can see, this is the nice picture: reward for going through all the trouble.



WISE AND OTHERWISE

by Michael Buckner

EDUCATION

by L.R. Grover

We know maculata means spotted,
And when plants need to be potted,
But when we use water
When we shouldn't oughter
We learn that botrytis means rotted.

as published in the British Cactus &
Succulent Journal, Vol 8 #3, 1990

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"The Mexican Pet"

A woman from La Mesa, California (a city east of San Diego), went to Tijuana, Mexico, to do some shopping. As any visitor to this border town knows, the streets near the shopping areas are populated with stray dogs. The woman took pity on one little stray and offered it a few bites of her lunch, after which it followed her around for the rest of the afternoon.

When it came time to return home, the woman had become so attached to her little friend that she couldn't bear to leave him behind. Knowing that it was illegal to bring a dog across the international border, she hid him among some packages on the seat of her car and managed to pass through the border checkpoint without incident. After arriving home, she gave the dog a bath, brushed his fur, then retired for the night with her newfound pet curled up at the foot of her bed.

When she awoke the next morning, she noticed that there was an oozing mucus around the dog's eyes, and a slight foaming at the mouth. Afraid that the dog might be sick, she rushed him to a nearby veterinarian and returned home to await word on her pet's condition.

The call soon came. "I have just one question," said the vet. "Where did you get this dog?"

The woman didn't want to get into trouble, so she told the vet that she had found the dog running loose in the street near her home in La Mesa.

But the vet didn't buy it. "You did not find this dog in La Mesa. Where did you get this dog?"

The woman nervously admitted having brought the dog across the border from Tijuana. "But tell me, doctor," she said. "What is wrong with my dog?"

His reply was brief and to the point: "First of all, it's not a dog—it's a Mexican sewer rat. And second, it's dying."

from THE MEXICAN PET - MORE "NEW" URBAN LEGENDS AND SOME OLD FAVORITES by Jan Harold Brunvand, W W NORTON & CO, N.Y., c. 1986

WISE AND

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"There are hidden contradictions in the minds of people who "love Nature" while deploring the "artificialities" in which "Man has spoiled 'Nature.'" The obvious contradiction lies in their choice of words, which imply that Man and his artifacts are not part of "Nature" --but beavers and their dams are. But the contradictions go deeper than this prima-facie absurdity. In declaring his love for a beaver dam (erected by beavers for beavers' purposes) and his hatred for dams erected by men (for the purposes of men) the "Naturist" reveals his hatred for his own race--i.e., his own self-hatred.

In the case of "Naturists" such self-hatred is understandable, they are such a sorry lot. But hatred is too strong an emotion to feel toward them; pity and contempt are the most they rate.

As for me, willy-nilly I am a man, not a beaver, and *H. sapiens* is the only race I have or can have. Fortunately for me, I like being part of a race made up of men and women--it strikes me as a fine arrangement and perfectly "natural".

Believe it or not, there were "Naturists" who opposed the first flight to old Earth's Moon as being "unnatural" and a "despoiling of Nature".

from THE NOTEBOOKS OF LAZARUS LONG by Robert Heinlein, G.P.Putnam's Sons, New York c.1973

OTHERWISE

"A key feature of exponential growth is that it often seems to start slowly and finish fast. A classic example used to illustrate this is the pond weed that doubles each day the amount of pond surface covered and is projected to cover the entire pond in thirty days. The question is, how much of the pond will be covered in twenty-nine days? The answer, of course, is that just half of the pond will be covered in twenty-nine days. The weed will then double once more and cover the entire pond the next day. As this example indicates, exponential growth contains the potential for big surprises."

from THE POPULATION EXPLOSION by Paul R. Ehrlich & Anne Ehrlich, Simon & Schuster, c.1990

"By the data to date, there is only one animal in the Galaxy dangerous to man--man himself. So he must supply his own indispensable competition. He has no enemy to help him."

Robert Heinlein

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Hillcrest Station 102
San Diego, CA 92163-3181



Editor - Michael Buckner Joyce Buckner
1958 Sunset Cliffs #103, San Diego 92107



The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society, Incorporated is open to all persons interested in growing cacti or other succulent and exotic plants. Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at 1:30 P.M. in Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Board of Directors meetings are held at 11:00 A.M. prior to general meetings. Annual dues are \$10 per single member per year, and \$5 for each additional member of same household. Single copies of Espinas y Flores are \$1 per copy sent within U.S.A. Affiliated with the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Incorporated.

A NON-PROFIT
TAX-EXEMPT
ORGANIZATION