

# ESPINAS Y FLORES



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

**Volume 38 Number 10  
Saturday October 11th 2003 1:00 PM  
Room 101 Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park**



# Presidents Message

September 20, 2003

Here it is the last weekend of Summer! The cooler nights and hot days are certainly agreeing with the plants - many are blooming in our landscape, especially the Pachypodiums... Our PICNIC last Saturday was wonderful. The heat, which had been predicted, held off and the weather was perfect - warm and breezy - for an afternoon at the park. Harry Griffen Park in La Mesa turned out to be a great spot - lots of space and shade. Thanks to Jeff Harris for all his help in setting up, as well as volunteering to stake out our spot starting at 7am. There was an amazing spread of great eats, thanks to all who showed up with goodies to share. The plant drawing was a popular event as most all members received a plant. Thanks to Lee Badger and Terry Parr for assembling and intriguing selection of plants. Katy and Youlia Demerritt performed the drawing and did a great job - THANKS girls for all you able assistance!

Another recent event was our Society sponsoring members to attend the Succulent Symposium at the Huntington on August 30. There were several fascinating talks on succulent plants of South America, including one on the evolution of cactus, that was very cutting edge. We had almost 20 members in attendance, including most of the people who have written articles for Espinas y Flores this year. The board has decided that this will probably be an ongoing benefit of membership as it is a great way to encourage

the advancement of knowledge, as well as encouraging members to write articles. If you would like to volunteer to write an article for 2004, thus be eligible for a full scholarship next year, talk to Jeff Harris who arranges the schedule...

Remember - we are having a TEE-SHIRT CONTEST! Our Society is planning to produce a shirt for our June Show and Sale -- June 5&6, 2004. We are hoping for a Southern California theme - so all you artistic types - bring your ideas to the October meeting and we will have the members look at them. If you have an idea and will not be coming to the meeting, please contact me so your idea can be considered.

We will be voting in November to replace several Board Members whose terms are expiring. If you are interested in being more involved in our society by serving on the Board, please talk to any board member at the next meeting so you can be nominated. The more people who participate, the funner and more successful we become - please do not be shy!

Hope to see you all on October 11th !

Pam Badger [pambad@earthlink.net](mailto:pambad@earthlink.net)



Program: John Trager of the Huntington Botanical Gardens will present the October program . It is a recount of his latest and hopefully greatest trip to South Africa this past year. I know we will enjoy it as John is a fantastic photographer with many book and journal credits as well as being an extremely knowledgeable grower and plants man. Please mark your calendar.

*A request of all our Members: Please lets make this an extra special meeting by filling up the brag table and sales tables! go out and pick out your pretty ones and let's show 'em what we got!*

Cactus of the Month: *Gymnocalycium* by Terry Parr

Succulent of the Month: "Bromeliads are Succulents?" by Tom Knapik

## SOUTH AFRICA

### ***Professor jailed for stealing succulents September 18, 2003***

By Melanie Gosling

A Japanese professor spent three nights in an Oudtshoorn jail and was then fined R75 000 for stealing over 500 rare and protected succulents.

Masahiko Hayashi, 56, a succulent expert, and his two adult children, were arrested by Cape Nature Conservation's "green crime unit" after a tipoff from a member of the public. The succulents have a big market in Japan and command high prices. Paul Gildenhuis from Cape Nature Conservation said he had searched the professor's hotel room in Oudtshoorn on Thursday last week and had found 564 protected succulents.

"He was definitely on a collection trip and it was well planned.

He had detailed topographical maps and had highlighted the farms where some of these succulents grow. We also found GPS (global positioning system) equipment. Some botanists describe in publications the exact locality where the plants are found, so that's probably why he had the GPS equipment. We confiscated the plants and all his equipment. "Each succulent was packed in paper towel in brown paper bags and there were carton boxes in his room. He will definitely be blacklisted and won't be able to return to South Africa," Gildenhuis said. He said Hayashi had hired a lawyer and an advocate, who had advised him to enter into a plea bargain with the state. He was convicted in the Oudtshoorn Regional Court on Tuesday for contravening the Nature Conservation Ordinance and being in possession of the plants without a permit.

The plants belonged to the *Haworthia* genus, some of which are extremely rare.

"The law says fines can be up to three times the value of the plants. I don't know what their

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# Gymnocalycium

By Terry Parr

*Gymnocalycium* is a diverse genus of cactus occurring east of the Andes in South America between approximate latitudes of 18°- 45° S. About 70 species are recognized, of which the majority are restricted to Argentina, with a few extending into Uruguay, the southern tip of Brazil, north-west Paraguay and the southeast sector of Bolivia.

The genus was erected by Ludwig Pfeiffer in 1844, and due to the high degree of phenotypic variability within species, literally hundreds of sub-species and varieties have since been named, in addition to incorrect designations of new species that have proven to be geographic variants of previously described forms.

The taxonomy of the genus was reviewed by Shutz (1986), who listed over 100 species (some acknowledged as questionable). Subsequently, the generally accepted work of Metzinger et al. (1995) acknowledged 79 species (37 accepted, and 42 provisionally accepted). Based primarily on this latter account, the International Cactus Systematics Group arrived at its listing of 71 species, each of which is summarized (32 with photos) in Edward Anderson's *The Cactus Family*, published in 1995. Pilbeam's (1995) also provides an excellent review of the genus. Many of the species are of recent discovery, with 13 described since 1990. About half of the species have been described since 1970.

Diagnostic features of Gymno-

calycium include the naked flower tube with broad obtuse scales (Figure 1), globose (low growing) body form, and flowers that are borne at, or near, the stem tip. Stamens are also specialized into two types. The evolution and phylogeny of the species and their geographic distributions are best explained by the highly divergent morphologies of seed types that are definitive attributes of the six sub-genera described by Schutz (1986).



Figure 1. *G. baldianum* showing naked flower tube (calyx)

Ulrich Creutzberg's extensive *Gymnocalycium* website (<http://home.t-online.de/home/Ulrich.Creutzberg>), includes detailed photographs of the seed types along with inclusive species lists, notes on classification, a bibliography and links to other relevant websites. Other sites devoted to the genus include those of Volker Schadich ([http://home.t-online.de/home/Guinivere/e\\_index.htm](http://home.t-online.de/home/Guinivere/e_index.htm)), with many

nice photos (including in habitat) and Gert Neuheber at <http://home.eduhi.at/cometo/gymnoneuheber/>.

Gymnos have become quite popular in the United States in recent years as they have become more available from seed propagation from local growers (such as C & J Cactus, in Vista, CA.) Their interesting diversity of spination, rib and tubercle geometry and plant body color (including multi-colored species) makes them interesting subjects that are often second only to only to the *Mammillarias* in the number of show and competition entries. The flowers tend to be less than spectacular, typically with white or pinkish coloration, but with a few species having attractive magenta, yellow or red flowers (Figure 1).

Most of the species are not difficult to grow. A mixture of equal parts pumice, super-soil (or COIR) and gritty sand works well, with liquid fertilizer during summer months (half the recommended house plant dose), or use of slow release bead fertilizers. They like to be repotted regularly. Size-wise, most of the species are suited to 4-inch pots. There are a few large species (*G. bueneckeri*, *G. horstii*, *G. saglionis*, *G. pflanzii*, *G. castellanosii*, *G. horridispinum* and *G. gibbosum*) that can fill up a 12-inch pot.

Gymnos vary in their light requirements. Some do well in full sun and others prefer filtered light or even shade. Most need only light shading from the sun in summer. Habitat photos indicate some species on open ground (Figure 2), while others are nestled and protected by shrubs and grasses. In general, the larger species can take full sun in the San Diego area

during the winter months, at least as far east as La Mesa.

Soil should be allowed to nearly dry out between waterings. Little, or no, watering is needed in winter. Gymnos are susceptible to mealy bugs, which are easily removed by hand due to the paucity of spines – or you can dunk the entire plant in a Malathion bath for three minutes, effectively treating both the soil and the plant. This is more effective than a Malathion spray.

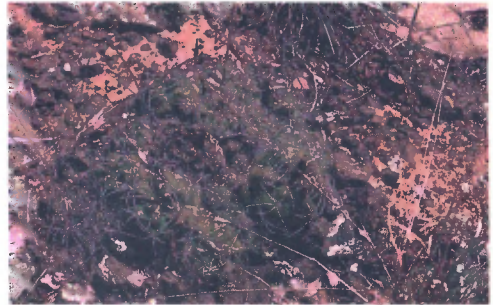


Figure 2. *Gymnocalycium fleischerianum* In habitat (Paraguay).

Gymnos come from relatively low elevations and are not tolerant of inland frost. However, they seem to survive an occasional light frost if the soil is dry. DO NOT over water, especially in winter, and you'll have a happy collection. Good luck. Glad to be growing!

#### References Cited:

- Anderson, E.F. 2001. The Cactus Family. Timber Press, Portland, Oregon. 776 pp.
- Metzing, D., M. Meregalli, and R. Kiesling. 1995. An annotated checklist of the genus *Gymnocalycium* Pfeiffer ex Mittler (Cactaceae). *Allionia* 33: 181-228.
- Pilbeam, J. 1995. *Gymnocalycium*, a Collector's Guide. AA. Balkema Publishers, Rotterdam, Netherlands. 191 pp.
- Schutz, B. 1986. Monografie Rodu *Gymnocalycium*. Brno: Vydal Klub Kaktusaro Astrophytum.

# Bromeliads are Succulents ?

By Tom Knapik

## *Bromeliads are Succulents?*

Well, not all of them. But, several genera have adapted to an arid existence by developing fleshy leaves. That water storage is crucial for the plants survival in some of the driest places on Earth. These characteristics make them ideal companions to the "other" succulents we grow. Below is an article by Penrith Goff on Succulent *Bromeliads*. He introduces these unusual plants to the succulent grower and provides some valuable information on their origins, characteristics, and their cultivation.

One of the best-kept secrets among succulent enthusiasts is the existence of succulent *Bromeliads*. At least that's the impression I get after glancing at a few of the books on succulents. The fact that many writers give them very little attention or none at all probably reflects a certain lack of appeal. Their flowers do not dazzle like *Mesembryanthemums*, there are no elephantine caudexes among them and as to far-out form, and they simply can't compare with the extra-terrestrial denizens of the African de-

sert. Still, they do have an appeal of their own. Hybridizers have been enhancing this appeal, so that there are a number of very handsome hybrids available. In general, they are very tough, drought resistant plants which make ideal houseplants and which (properly acclimated) can be put out in the summer without fear of sun damage. The following paragraphs will introduce a few of major genera.

*Bromeliads* began as terrestrials. Most of them, in their struggle for light, moved from the dark forest floor up into the developed a reservoir or "tank" in the center of their rosettes, in which they stored water from rain to rain. They began to depend more on their leaves than on their roots for the procurement of water and nutrients.



*Dyckia mariner lapostollei*

The atmospheric *Tillandsias*, the true "air plants," began to use their roots only as a holdfast to bark or stone. Some (e.g., Spanish moss) stopped producing roots at all under ordinary circumstances. Some *Bromeliads* to be sure were quite happy with their forest floor habitat.

The beautiful earth stars (*Cryptanthus*) flourished in the dank and deeply shaded environment.



They did not develop a tank because they didn't need one. One *Cryptanthus* species however, *C. warasii*, was forced to adapt to a more rugged way of life. *C. warasii* survived under arid and sunny conditions that would quickly have killed off any of its rain forest cousins. It adapted by developing thickened leaves (a tank would have been useless!) in which it could store water and armed it self with teeth to keep animals at bay. In short, it became a succulent.



*Dyckia 'Brittle Star'*

*C. warasii* typifies the succulent bromeliads. It is a rosette of many leaves spiraled around the central axis; it forms new offshoots in the leaf axils, soon forming a clump. It could be taken for an *Aloe* or *Agave* when it is not on bloom. However, instead of being hoisted on a lofty stalk, its flowers are nestled in the center of the rosette like all *Cryptanthus*. Like *C. warasii* the succulent bromeliads often resemble an *Agave*, *Aloe*, or *Haworthia*. One difference is in the leaf surface. The scales or trichomes which produce the silver banding and the often velvety surface characteristic of many bromeliads are found also in the succulent bromeliads. *C. warasii* despite its tough looking exterior is velvety to the touch. The leaves of *C. warasii* are edged with well-defined teeth (cf. the fine teeth of its rain forest relatives). The leaves of succulent bromeliads are usually armed, often viciously.

Unlike their epiphytic relatives the succulent bromeliads develop a prodigious root system and require good-sized pots in order to grow well. Many of them tolerate full sun. Although they are succulent they require

a good deal of water during the growing season. During the winter they are best kept, like other succulents, on the dry side at cooler temperatures. Some can get through the winter with no watering but most need to be watered occasionally, especially if they show signs of dehydration. They

may be fertilized during the growing period but weakly as with other succulents. Their character is best developed under "hard" cultivation: lots of light, moderate water, little fertilizer.

The following list is limited to succulent terrestrial bromeliad species which can grow under the same conditions as cacti and other desert succulents, often growing in company with them in their natural habitat.

***Abromeitiella*:** Name abandoned. Its four species were reassigned recently to the genus *Deuterocohnia* (see below).

***Cryptanthus*:** 32 species. Succulents among the Earth Stars are the exception: *C. warasii*, as described above, and *C. bahianus*, which, though not as succulent as *C. warasii*, flourishes in sun and sandy soil.

**Deuterocohnia.** Ca. 14 species. *D. brevifolia* and *D. lorentziana* (formerly *Abromeitiella*) form large mats or cushions of small rosettes in the Argentinian and Bolivian Andes. Their tubular green flowers (1 "+) emerge from leaf axils. *D. longipetala*: mat-forming rosettes with 4"-12" leaves, flowers borne on a stalk 2 1/2'+ high. Stalk, if left uncut, will bloom again in following years (unique among bromeliads!).

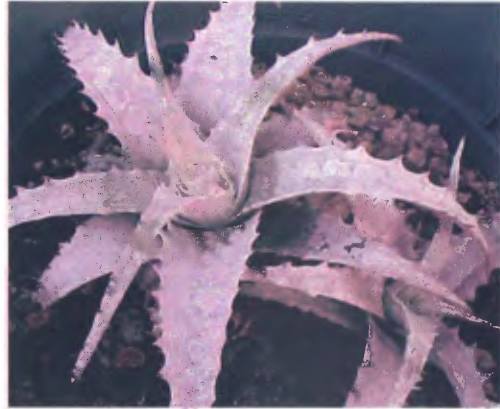
**Dyckia.** Ca. 121 species. Native to arid regions of Brazil and found also in neighboring countries to the Southwest. Winter temperatures down to low 40's. Clump-or mat-forming with small yellow, orange, or red flowers borne on a short stalk (but *D. remotiflora* has a 12"-16" stalk). Seed borne in capsules.

**Encholirium.** Ca. 29 species native to dry areas in northeast Brazil. Similar to *Dyckia* in habit. Flowers green or yellow-green. *E. spectabile* named for its inflorescence, 16" long, covered with 1 " yellow flowers.



**Hechtia.** Ca. 48 species native to Mexico and found also in southern U.S., Guatemala, and Honduras. Inflorescence intricately branched carried on long stem. Flowers white, green yel-

low-green, pink. Blooming shoot does not die immediately after blooming. This together with prolific pupping produces large clump: *Hechtia tillandsiodes* (ca. 12" diam.) has soft gray leaves and like *Tillandsias* (air plants) no teeth.



**Orthophytum.** Ca.24 species native to Brazil, so-named (ortho+phytum=straight plant) because at maturity (in some species) the stem carrying the inflorescence also bears normal leaves, giving the plant an upright appearance. *O. foliosum* is 2' high. *O. saxicola* does not develop tall stalks. It covers rock with mats of 4-6" rosettes, its white flowers nestled between leaves.

I'll be showing some slides of these genera from my recent travels in Brazil, Chile, and Peru, but definitely bring in any that you have in your collection to share with the other club members.

-Tom Knapik



# Syphonject (Siphonex) Salvation

By Terry Parr

## The Dilemma

If you're taking up most of a summer morning to fertilize your plants while watering, the Siphonex hose attachment will save you a bundle of time. The typical Sunday morning routine is to repetitiously add water soluble fertilizer to watering cans, hoping to water several hundred plants before the sun starts blazing; or you may have one of those Miracle-Grow hose attachments filled with fertilizer – the problem being that it delivers a mega-dose at first, declining to nothing as the fertilizer is used up.

## The Solution

The Dramm Syphonject (Siphonex) can solve the problem. With this simple device, a five gallon bucket, and your favorite water soluble fertilizer, the job of fertilizing and watering can be significantly reduced, while delivering a consistent fertilizer dose to your plants.

## The Details

The Syphonject (Figure 1) is attached between the tap and the hose fitting and draws a concentrated solution from a bucket through a flexible suction tube. The concentrate is diluted with the passing water stream to deliver a consistent ratio of approximately 16 parts water to one part concentrate. A five gallon bucket of concentrate is used up with 80 gallons of tap water and that will satisfy the thirst for a good number of potted cactus, Geraniums,

Mesembs, Crassulas, smelly Stapeliads, etc.

The Syphonject needs a reasonable amount of hose water pressure in order to be able to draw up the concentrate. Normal hose pressures in the San Diego area are adequate as long as your tap is not at a much lower elevation than your watering area. Also, if your nozzle setting is too restrictive of water flow, you may have some problems in drawing in the concentrate. The laws of hydraulics dictate that watering long distances uphill, and using an extremely thin hose (remember Reynolds numbers?) with restricted nozzle flow may result in failure.

To maximize water flow with a soft spray (to avoid blasting your plants), a nozzle with many small holes is recommended, as shown in Figure 1 (with 92 holes), available at Walmart. Any nozzle used should have a shutoff valve on the handle, as you may want to turn the water off and on while moving about your plants.

I haven't found the Syphonjet to be available from local nurseries or landscape suppliers. Perhaps there are some around San Diego somewhere. However, it can be ordered with your credit card over the phone (410-327-8403) from Home Harvest Garden Supply for \$16.95. Also online at [www.Homeharvest.com](http://www.Homeharvest.com). They may refer to it as either Siphonex, or Sy-

phonject.

A note on fertilizing: Schultz and Miracle-Gro water soluble fertilizers are generally available at Home Depot and Walmart. The advised dilution ratio for houseplants should be cut in half for cactus and succulents. For example, Miracle-Gro recommends one teaspoon per gallon for houseplants. To figure the amount for the 16:1 concentrate for C/S, this would be ½ teaspoon, then multiplied by 16, which ends up as 8 teaspoons per gallon, or 40 teaspoons for a 5-gallon bucket (Figure 1), or roughly 13 tablespoons.

## The Epiphany

Think of all that extra time you'll have for repotting and pulling weeds. Good luck, happy fertilizing. Glad to be growing.



Figure 1. Syphonject hose attachment with 5-gallons of water-soluble concentrate and recommended sprinker wand. This setup provides 85 gallons of water with consistent fertilizer dose

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value is in Japan, so we went on the local value. There is a big market for them in Japan," Gildenhuys said.

Oudtshoorn botanist Jan Vlok said some *Haworthia* plants are so rare that they are restricted only to one koppie.

In a separate incident, Gildenhuys pulled over a busload of Japanese tourists between Oudtshoorn and Calitzdorp last week after being tipped off that the tourists had been collecting succulents.

"I had a warrant to search the bus and the passengers. We didn't find any plants on the bus but found two Postnet receipts for parcels posted to Japan. We followed that up and intercepted them at Johannesburg airport and they contained succulents.

"Unfortunately we couldn't arrest the tourists until we had evidence, and by the time we got the parcels, they had left the country. But we know who they are and will follow it up through Interpol or the Japanese embassy," Gildenhuys said. - Environment Writer

# Upcoming Events

## 2003

**October 11–12 Central Florida C&SS Plant Sale** in conjunction with the Botanical Gardens at USF in Tampa, Florida, off Fowler Avenue. 10am to 4pm. Contact Vicki Hunter at 1-800-226-2527 ext. 448

**October 17–18 9th Xeriscape Conference: *Water: Our Future ... Our Legacy.*** Our two confirmed water keynoters are: **Dr Peter Gleick** and **Amy Vickers**. **Dr Gleick** is President of the Pacific Institute and author of *The World's Water 2002-2003*. He will open the conference on Friday with a report on the global water situation. **Amy Vickers**, of Amherst, Mass., is author of the *Handbook of Water – Use and Conservation* and will keynote the Saturday session. We have also invited **Governor Richardson** to kick-off the conference on Friday morning. Other confirmed speakers include: **Dr Katherine Gleason**, Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department, Cornell University, who has excavated ancient gardens in the Mediterranean to reveal their structure for utilization of water; **Tom Swetnam**, Director of the Tree Ring Lab at the University of Arizona; **Mike Kernodle**, former USGS hydrologist who studied New Mexico water availability; **Doug Bennett**, formerly with Albuquerque Water Conservation Office and now implementing conservation measures in Las Vegas, NV; Additional speakers will be announced soon. For more information visit our web site. Register early on our secure web site—<http://www.xeriscape.nm.com> (All major charge cards) At the Albuquerque Convention Center and Exhibit Hall. Fee for the 2-day conference will remain \$100.00. This fee includes program materials, lunch both days and access to the exhibit hall where we plan on about 100 booths/exhibitors! Mail registration to Xeriscape Council, PO Box 14311, Albuquerque, NM 87191. More details from Scott Varner—e-mail: [scott@xeriscapenm.com](mailto:scott@xeriscapenm.com)

**October 18–19 Orange County C&SS Show and Sale**, Fullerton Arboretum

**October 18–19 San Gabriel Valley C&SS Show and Sale**, LA Arboretum.

## 2004

**January 17** : CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**April 17** : CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**May 3 - 5** : **Sonoran V Conference** at Inn Suites Hotel (formerly the Ramada Inn) Theme will be BAJA. Speakers and workshops. Tentative plans include Friday night pre-conference dinner, speaker and opening of the plant sales area for all members and conference participants. Conference opening will be on Saturday morning for registrants. Show and Sale open to public. Silent auction, raffle and a special dinner on Saturday night featuring recipes utilizing cacti, succulents and other desert plants. Number of registrants will be limited to 100.

**June 11 - 13** : **Mid-West Conference** Hosted by River City C&SS and Mid-Iowa C&SS. Travel Lodge, Council Bluffs, Iowa. Details: Kathy Bokelman 402-592-1355 or e-mail her at [Kathy@katbroker.com](mailto:Kathy@katbroker.com)

**July 1 - 3** : **CSSA Show and Sale** at HBG (Note: HBG closed on July 4) Entrance to HBG is free on July 1, 2004.

**August 20 - 22** : **14th Eastern C&S Conference** at the DoubleTree Guest Suites in Plymouth Meeting PA. Hosted by the Philadelphia C&SS. While you're there, enjoy Longwood Gardens and Morris Arboretum, world-class museums and a brand new baseball stadium. For more info contact Co-chairpersons, Rita Hojnowski 856-227-0599 [ritabhoj@comcast.net](mailto:ritabhoj@comcast.net) or Elayne Toizer e-mail: [atoizer@aol.com](mailto:atoizer@aol.com) or tel: 215-233-2965 **Succulent Lovers, Unite!!!**

**August 21** : **British C&SS National Show**, Spalding Exhibition Centre, Springfield, Spalding, Lincs, England.

**September 4** : **21st Huntington Symposium** at Huntington Botanical Gardens.

**September 5** : **CSSA Board Meeting**, Huntington Botanical Gardens.

**Mid-October** : **CSSA Tour** to Chile, home to *Copiapoa*, *Eriosyce*, *Eulychnia* and others. See request for applications and itinerary in last issue of *To The Point*.



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