



ESPINAS

Y

FLORES



TOMO IV, No.8

AUG. 1969

PUBLICATION OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

AN OLD MAN, A NEW THOUGHT

AS SUSPECTED July was one beautiful month. The *Metrosideros* were blooming with the delight of a luminated christmas tree in the pre-dawn darkness of a home anxious for the arrival of that funny little man with suit of red flannel and silken beard of snowy white. The *Eucalyptus* with vibrant red, salmon, pink and white heralding a Christmas in July. The ripe old moon was brought so close one could see the bloodless petals of the "queen of the night" reflecting in the eye of the Eagle". Warm ocean breezes made the lawns of our seaside parks lush and soft, just right for napping and being over-whelmed with a late, but magnificent, case of Spring Fever.

AUG. MEETING

Saturday, Aug. 2, 1969 - 2pm
Floral Association Building
Balboa Park

Grafting Session
with
Bob Taylor

Braggin' Table
Plant Sale

Exchange Table

Refreshments

Don't forget your tools

We watch, but cannot see
The seed invisibly
Become the Oak or Pine
Or sweet, fall fruiting vine.
Things have a time to root,
To flower and to fruit.
We see the ascent gained
And see stature attained,
But cannot see things grow
The process is too slow.
Patiently, thought by thought,
New ways of life are wrought.

The other day an old man was observed planting fruit trees in his back yard that adjoined a City Park. The Park gardener, who knew that the man was more than 80 years of age, chided him a little for planting such young trees since he probably would not live to enjoy their fruit. But the elderly man replied that he was deliberately planting trees which, in all likelihood, would not yield fruit until after he was gone. He went on to explain that he had just come to the conclusion that all

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AN OLD MAN (cont) his life he had been eating fruit from trees planted by others. He felt that it was only fair that he should plant some trees which would yield their fruit to those who would come after him.

As we sat in the afternoon looking out over the garden watching the rays of sun light expressively executing a pantomimic dance on amber spines and shadows giving texture and form to frosty white mounds set in a orchestral rhythm of hues and shades, it is difficult to think of us as ryots, who merely go to these fields to fulfill our daily obligations. Patiently, thought by thought.. old habits are untaught. It is not through human determination, nor by power or might, but by the silent workings of the Spirit, though organized thought, that the Divine imparts its power to man. Patiently, thought by thought, new ways of life are wrought.



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GARDEN VISIT ETHICS

The following rules are based on courtesy and common sense. They have been adopted by many horticultural societies and we commend them to our members: (1) Whenever possible, make an appointment in advance with your host to visit his garden at his convenience. Then keep your appointment promptly. (2) Do not bring small children. (3) Do not bring dogs or other pets. (4) Do not carry large bag or flowing coat or anything that might injure plants. (5) Do not step off paths and into beds, unless invited to do so. (6) Do not touch flowers or plants unless invited to do so. There are

other things that may be considered too: Do not ask for cuttings or plants; the host may not wish to refuse you, yet he may not welcome other visitors, if he thinks all are beggars. Instead, you may admire something and perhaps the host will offer a gift. Most gardeners like to share their plants, especially with someone who appreciates them. Find out if the host has other engagements, so as not to pro-

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CACTIVITY

THIS WILL NOT BE a one-man show. It's a Club Grafting Cactivity. Last year Bob was the busiest man in Balboa Park. This year we want general participation. Everyone should get into the act..... add ONE to ONE and get ONE. Last year: ONE table, this year, FOUR, FIVE or MORE.

You may bring your own stock and scions. Or you may make a selection from Bob's stock (at a nominal cost). Bob will have stock and scions to match -- combinations which he says are "congenial", which get along well together. If you've seen the results of his grafting at the Taylor Hilltop, you know the man knows what he's talking about.

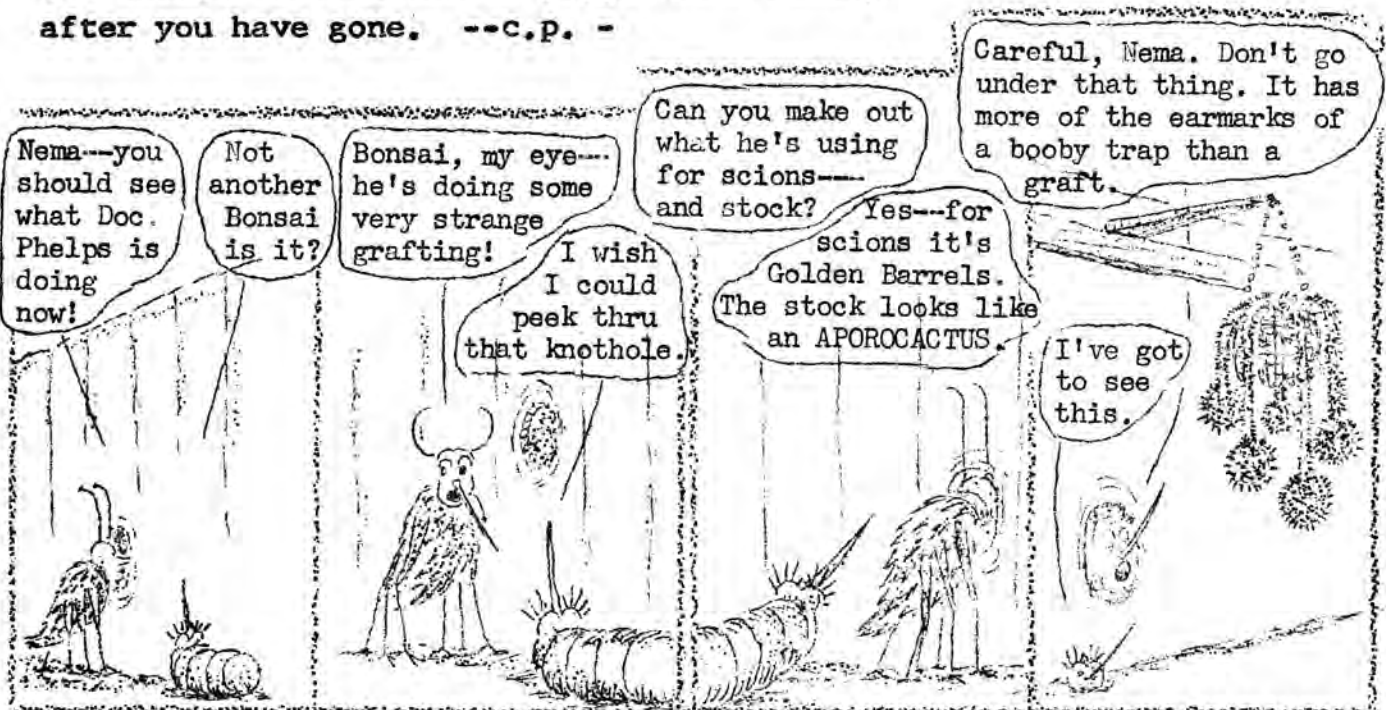
We will need extra knives and tongs. Bob has two sets but that isn't enough. Bring your own if you prefer. Remember to mark them so you'll recognize them quickly at day's end. Did you ever hear about the surgeon who counted his sponges and found one missing after he had stitched up the patient. Let's have no mix-ups..... - cc -

GARDEN VISIT ETHICS (cont)

long your visit to his discomfort. Do not tell your host you have a plant like the one he is showing you proudly, nor tell him about a friend of yours who has one, nor a story about the plant. Remember that your visit is to see his garden and not to tell him about yours.

Don't forget that most gardens are not designed to accommodate ladies high heel shoes.

And as a final thought, if you want to appear more interested, instead of just curious; bring along a note pad and pencil. He may not know how to spell the names any better than you do, but you may get enough information to joggle your memory after you have gone. --c.p. -



ROCKS POPS

YOU MAY BE DOING a lot of pounding, chiseling, drilling and digging, and maybe a little cussin' between now and next May. WHY? At

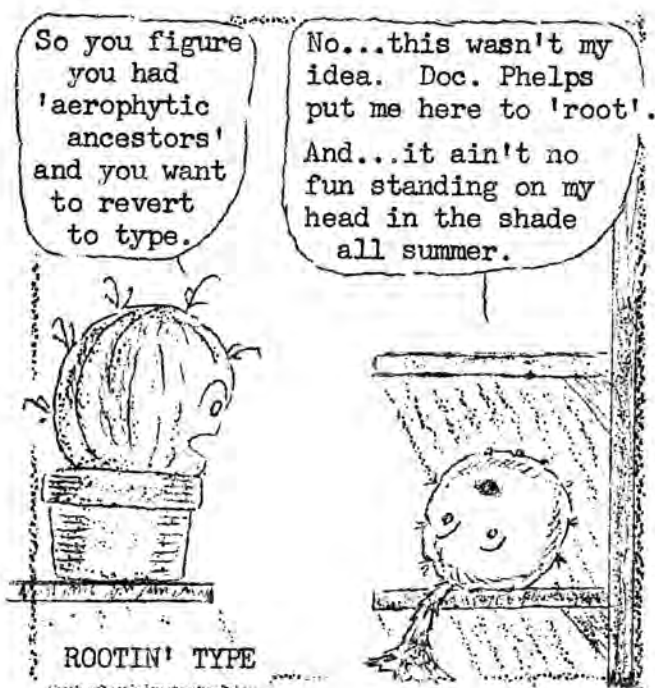
the May, 1970, meeting we hope to see the results of all the above energy-expending activities in the shape of several attractive, clever, ingenious FEATHERSTONE ROCK & PLANT ARRANGEMENTS for use at the 1970 California Expo.8

A number of members indicated they were interested in this new project at the July meeting. If you haven't already started digging, or "mining" if you prefer, this is how you go about it: Go to Hazard's on Friar's Road in Mission Valley. At the right of the entrance you'll see Featherstones of all shapes and shapes and sizes, some small and cute, others that only a bulldozer could manipulate. Make a selection - it sells by weight, 8¢ a pound - you'll be surprised how big and heavy it looks and how strong you'll appear to be. You should find just about what you want, but remember you'll be doing quite a bit of shaping and forming yourself, always with the ultimate objective of having an attractive and useful planter in your yard - and of course you'll be aiming at one of the three prizes.

We warn you: Featherstone is volcanic glass. It was spewed out of a volcano a long time ago, and all the volcano had to work with was glass and gas. The gas is long gone, but the glass remains. It comes mostly in dark shades, but some pieces of it look "ashen". Differences add variety to your project.

Glass suggests, even DEMANDS glasses and gloves all the time you are drilling and chiselling. The alternative is to have band aids within reach or to make an unscheduled trip to the eye doctor if you don't go by the rules. You'll become an expert in a very short time as the holes get deeper and deeper. Also douse the rock with water while working with it. And you might try it for "porosity" by pouring water in a little depression on the top side. You might find a piece which responds to water like the adobe in your back yard. If drainage isn't satisfactory from your viewpoint, you might punch a hole all the way through. The rocks vary considerably in their capacity to disperse water. You'll have to become acquainted with the particular pieces you select.

The object of this contest is to see how much imagination, ingenuity and talent we have in the Club - we think there is considerable. And we'd like to have several pieces of "rock art" available for the '70 Expo. The ground rules are simple - you must have a rock, and the rock must contain on or more plants (cacti or succulents) and you may enter more than one. We wouldn't be surprised if we are surprised with the results come next May, but isn't that what we want?



To add interest as well as enthusiasm to the project, your Board of Directors will be asked to offer prizes for best efforts, or more particularly, RESULTS. FIRST \$7.50; SECOND, \$5.00, and THIRD \$2.50.

This may wind up as a weight lifting exercise, but remember you are the one who will have to bring the result to the May meeting. Since it is basically a rock project (Featherstone) it could be that the judges will be making their decisions in rocking chairs with feather pillows.

REMEMBER: 1) WEAR GLOVES, 2) WEAR GLASSES, 3) KEEP THE ROCK WET. Sign up at the August meeting and turn out a good specimen for the May meeting.

PS. We've heard that some of the members have been "casing" the rock pile at Hazard's already, but we're sure the supply is ample.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

ECHEVERIA GIBBIFLORA - Pronunciation is given three ways - esh-ève- E-ria - éch-o-VEER-i-a- and ek-e-VEE-ree-ah, but is definitely names for D. Atansio Echeverria, the Mexican botanical artist who did the illustrations for *Flora Mexicana* (1858). Gibbiflora (jibbi-FLO-ra) means having flowers with swelling or hump on one side. So you don't have to look that up in your Funk & Wagnall's. The broadly spatulate leaves are rounded above, keeled below, from 5-10" long and half as wide, and gray-blue in color with pinkish undertones. The reddish urn-shaped flowers are borne on scapes up to 20" long in a one-sided cluster. This echeveria is one of the largest of the heavy-stemmed branching types.



The variety METALLICA naturally possesses a conspicuous metallic sheen which can be a gorgeous sight to behold when after years of regular care it reaches two or three feet with a bonus of scarlet flowers. The leaves are rounded at the apex and are a soft pinkish bronze with white and red along the margins. (Color description by Chidamian.) Let's hope someone brings such a beauty to share visually for it sounds fantastic!

Variety CARUNCULATA has curiously puckered, blister-like growths on the leaf surface, more curious than appealing. Offsets are rarely produced but flower stems can be used for cuttings, allowing several leaves for each cutting, and much patience. (Butterfield in the Jan-Feb 1958 *National Journal* has more to say than I can condense, and so does the leading authority, Eric Walter in the March-April issue of that same year).

Variety CRISPATA has crinkled leaf margins with plantlets sometimes forming on the flower stalks.

ECHEVERIA GIBBIFLORA hybridizes easily in nature and for man, and many named hybrids are available, particularly from Henrietta's Nursery in Fresno, Calif. All varieties make splendid houseplants, as well as coloring more vividly when grown in the open. As they seem to be especially susceptible to root nematodes, it is well to investigate if plants seem to gradually weaken. If you spot any knot-like swellings -- OFF with the roots including the base of the stem, then re-root. Start with healthy plants in equal parts of sandy loam, well-rotted leafmold, and good sharp sand, providing good drainage and protection from frost.

In order to retain the large cabbage-type rosette it is well to keep flowering stalks pinched out - if one has the heart to do it.

Since there are so many varieties within the species, all of which are eligible for the Bragging Table, we should have a great selection of handsome plants - certainly large
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PLANT OF THE MONTH - Continued

enough to be seen from all corners when voting times comes along. Next month will be Agave Shawii - volunteer to write it, anyone?
-- Nibby

OPUNTIA VULGARIS VARIEGATA (JOSEPH'S COAT)

Joseph's Coat is a cactus of doubtful name, scientifically. Some authorities and the trade call it *OPUNTIA VULGARIS VARIEGATA*, (o-pun-ti-a or oh-pun-shi-ah vul-gar-us var-i-a-gá-ta) but other authorities say that is a mistake and the plant is really *OPUNTIA MONOACANTHA VARIEGATA* (mon-o-a-can-tha). From the descriptions I would go along with the second naming. The cactus is readily recognized from its common name as it refers to the mixture of colors in the pad which are white or yellow and pink mixed with the green background.

This cactus is the subgenus *PLATYOPUNTIA*, meaning it has flat pads. The genus name is derived from Opuntiani, the people who lived in the ancient city of Opus, Greece, where the true *OPUNTIA VULGARIS* became naturalized. *VULGARIS* means, loosely, heavily spined and *monoacantha* means one-spined. Since Joseph's Coat is usually one-spined in the body of the pad, I would tend to accept *O. Monoacantha Variogata* as the correct species.

The plant will grow to five feet tall and eventually develops a sturdy trunk. The areoles are fairly far apart on the pads and there is usually a single spine from each. Young pads may have up to three spines per areole. It will grow under varying conditions so long as the soil drains readily. Joseph's Coat grows fast from single pad cuttings and will do so under cramped conditions. It blooms rather young, and has a yellow flower followed by a red fruit.

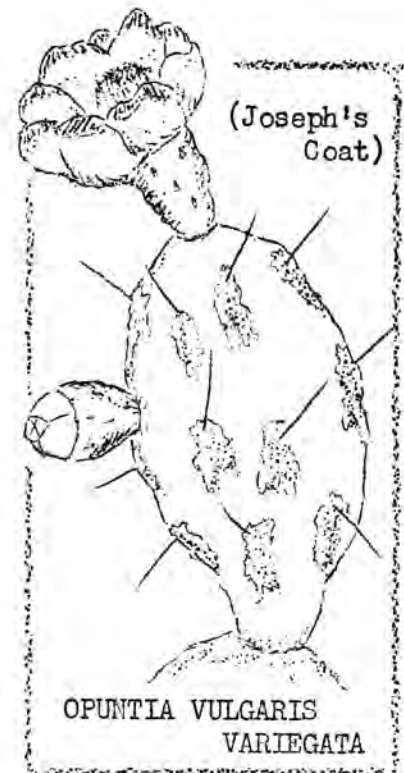
The colors in the plant are apparently at their most intense in full sun to light shade, although some plants color very nicely in heavier shade. It can be fairly spectacular and many people will want it as a focal point among their normally green collection.

-- By L. N. Phelps

ECHEVERIAS

Most Echeverias are hardy, fast growing, not fussy about growing conditions and require minimum care. They reproduce at a prodigious rate and flower over a long period of time. The range of size, color, and form is infinite. What more can a gardener ask???

To grow specimen or show plants, a little more care and attention pays dividends. Good sandy loam, some fertilizer and humus worked into



ECHEVERIAS (cont)

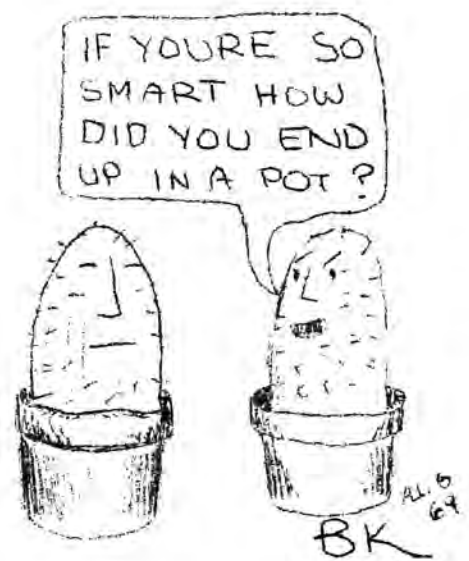
the soil, filtered sun, plenty of water during the growing season, and your reward will often be spectacular. When autumn brings cooler weather, Echeveria colors become intense and for two or three months their blaze of color will dominate your garden.

Because many offset lavishly, the problem of propagation is simple. The large-leaved types which rarely offset can be propagated from bloom stalks, each bract, in time, producing one or more plantlets. Quite a number of the smaller Echeverias will reproduce from leaves. Seed, while slower, also do quite well, often producing a new kind of plant. "Topping", or cutting the head is a good practice for two reasons; as the thick stem saps a good deal of the strength, the reestablished plant will develop a larger head of leaves; furthermore, if topped at the right time of year, the old trunk is likely to yield two or three new heads which may in turn be removed and planted.

Echeverias seem to make their most rapid growth during the cooler days of spring and early summer, noticeably slowing down here in southern California in the hot days of July. Around the San Francisco Bay area, they grow steadily through the entire summer, their colors richer and deeper. In the hot dry desert areas they prove more difficult to grow, needing more shade and water. Where heat and humidity is high the problem is in reverse. A little experimenting with your own conditions of location, soil, watering will soon determine the best way to grow your particular plant.

There is surely a size and form as well as color to suit every gardener's taste or needs. There are tiny ones for miniature or dish gardens and there are those that lend themselves for borders or ground covers. For specimen or accent plants there are many very large ones with wonderfully gay, imaginative names. The extravagant scope of colors..white, greens from chartreuse to emerald, bronze tones, pink, coral and rose, reds, too many to name, also lavenders and purples. There are many forms, tight rosettes, fluted, carunculated, curly-leaved, narrow leaved and some as big and round as a dinner plate. Some are waxy in texture, some covered with a fine white powder and many velvety ones.

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ECHEVERIAS (cont)

Flowers, while individually small, grow in racemes, each plant producing a great number. The flowers, mostly pink and coral, but are sometimes red or yellow, the stalks and bracts, too, are often very colorful. Since they last for months, there is scarcely a time of the year when you will not have plants in bloom.

If you aren't very careful, the Echeveria "bug" will bite you, incurring an incurable fondness for this genus of plants. I know!!! I was bitten nearly fifty years ago and I am still affected!

-- Vivienne W. Doney, "Cactus Growers' Guidelines" --

VEGETATIVE PROPAGATION

There are many desirable plants to be seen in collections which one would love to house if only one could obtain one. I am not referring to those xerophytic monstrosities referred to elsewhere, but to ordinary succulent plants.

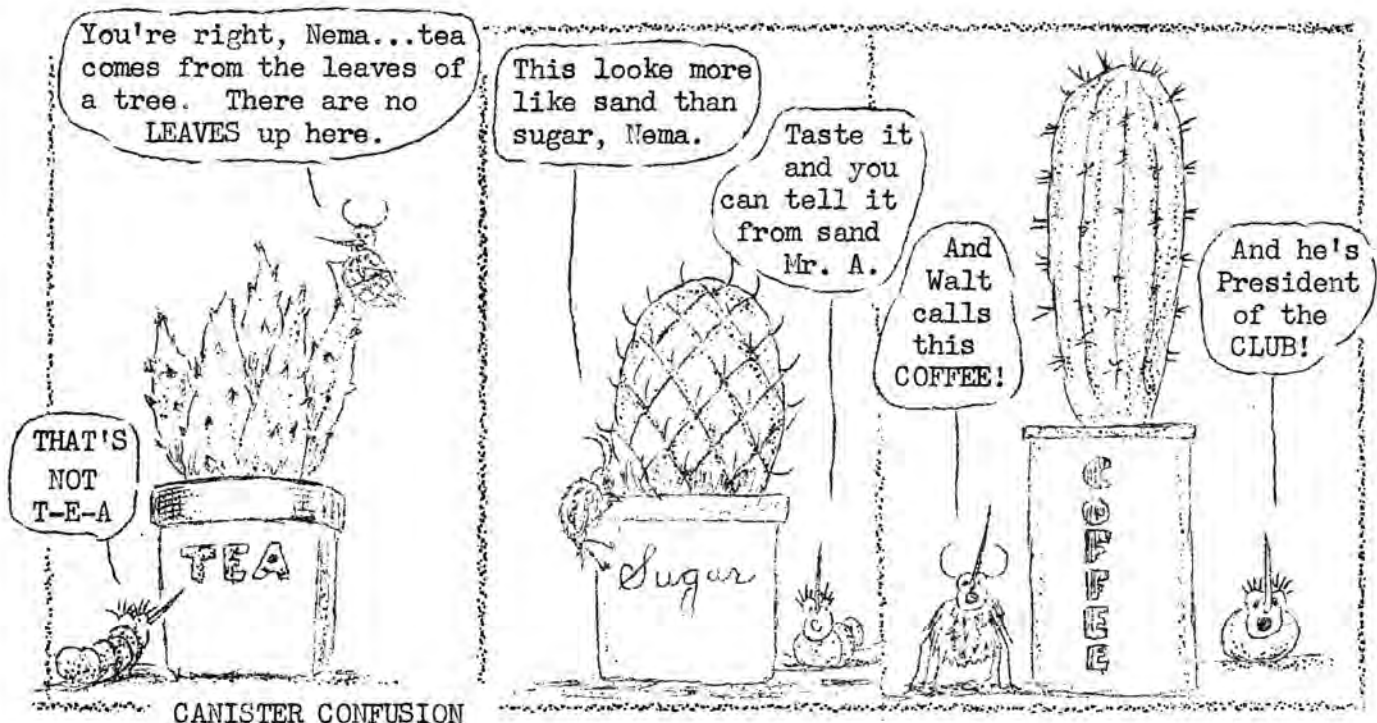
Echeveria gibbiflora is a case in point. The variety carunculata is well known but not so easily obtainable. Leaves detached complete can be persuaded to root, but that is the end product - only a rooted leaf. New plants of E. gibbiflora var. carunculata can easily be obtained in two ways:

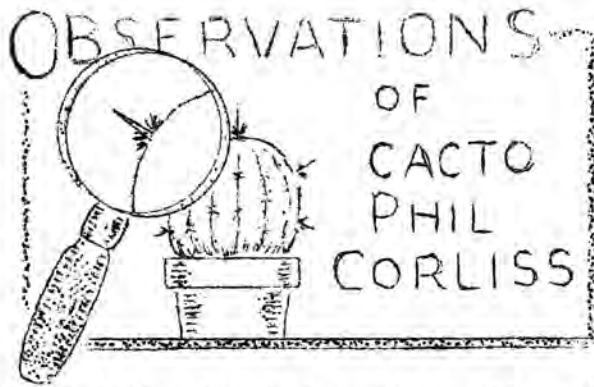
(1) Either the leaves, which form along the flower stem (pedicel) can be removed or the flower stem can be chopped up, cutting below each axil, when each floral leaf will give birth to a new plant or

(2) the parent can be persuaded to sprout along the stem at the old leaf scars. As many have found to their cost when decapitating this variety, to reduce the exposed stem, the old stock immediately dies. There are two ways of avoiding this. Firstly by cutting the stem immediately above the newly forming pedicel (the state) or by covering the top of the stock immediately after cutting with a generous solution of collodian, which is sold under a variety of proprietary names.

Another method which is sometimes successful is to form an aerial root on the ripened part of the stem. This may be done at any

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THERE IS A CONDITION which attacks cactus plants in which a brownish discoloration starts at the BASE and gradually ascends to cover the entire plant, at which time the plant ceases to grow or bloom. This may or may not be related to a similar discoloration which starts in spots on the sides of plants and which is seen following an infestation of scale insects. I asked about this at the panel discussion on culture at the recent convention and also discussed it with several experts. They were generally familiar with

the condition but had no explanation of cause nor specific treatment. The general consensus seemed to be that it is due to a combination of environmental conditions and virus or fungus. Certain species are particularly susceptible to this malady. Unaffected offsets of affected plants, removed and grown under various conditions, still develop the trouble. In my collection it is most often seen in the globular euphorbias and South American cacti, notably echinopses, rebutias, lobivias, and gymnocalyciums. It is my feeling that if a variety develops this condition you might as well give up trying to grow it, although I have a stenocactus coptonogonus affected with it in the screen house, while another plant in the open ground remains unaffected. If anyone knows the answer to cause or cure, it should be published.

The worst weed to contend with in a cactus garden is oxalis. Like nutgrass, it can regenerate from bits of broken roots, and trying to eliminate it by hand often results in its multiplication. The seed pod has a curious mechanism by which it explodes and shoots the seeds over a rather wide area. It can now be controlled with "OXALIS-KIL". As with all chemicals, you must follow directions for best results. In brief, it is sprayed onto the oxalis foliage when the garden needs water and when the temperature will rise to at least 70 degrees. Use the recommended dilution. It is eminently satisfactory.-c.p.-

VEGETATIVE PROPAGATION (cont)

time, whether the plant is in flower or not. In case the method is not known, the stem is cut halfway through in the horizontal plane and the upper portion of the stem is persuaded to tear, or is cut. The cut is pegged open with a match stick. Moist sphagnum moss, fine peat, or vermiculite are then applied and retained in place by polythene sheeting tied in place, firmly but not tightly. Again the rising sap will keep the stock sound while the upper part is being rooted. If one is not in a hurry to remove the newly rooted top, the stock may branch on the side where the vascular bundles have been cut. Do not water the sphagnum moss very often and then very sparingly.

It is desirable to keep the plant in some shade when carrying out any of these operations for obvious reasons. It is however essential to keep the stock plentifully supplied with water and in a rich compost, or give a little feed. - G.M. Taylor, A.S.P.S. 8/67 -

WANTED: One copy of May-June 1967 Cactus and Succulent Journal

Librarian Ruth Nelson is all set to have the 1967 issues of the Journal bound for the Club Library. But she can't find the May-June issue. It's missing--it's long over-due. If you have it, hold up your hand. If you have an extra copy, which you would like to contribute to the library, or if you know someone who has a copy..you can make Ruth very happy. You could become an instant-hero. - c.c. -