



# Espinas y Flores

BULLETIN OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY  
*Affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Inc.*

Vol. X, No. 6

June 1975

PROGRAM:

"The Bloom's the Thing" or:

Cactus Flower Photography on a Budget, by Dr. G. Radwin.

June 14, 1975, 1:30 pm, Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

CACTUS OF THE MONTH: Matucana

SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH: Haworthia and Gasteria

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MEMBERSHIP: The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society is open to all persons interested in growing cacti, other succulents and exotic plants.

Dues: \$ 5.00 annually, due in December of each year.

Single copy of E y F : \$ 0.50.

Meetings: 2nd Saturday of each month, 1:30 pm. Board meets after general meeting.

Deadline for July publication is June 16, 1975.

## SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH

### Haworthia and Gasteria

Madelyn Lee

#### HAWORTHIA (Duval) Family: Liliaceae

The first Haworthia (H. recurva) was brought into Europe from S.W. Africa around 1701. At first included with Aloes, the genus was later separated and named for Adrian Haworth, an English botanist.

Haworthias are generally small, rosette-shaped plants, seldom over six inches tall. They make good yard plants if you have a rocky sloped area with light shade and good drainage. They also grow very well in pots. Their nasty habit of dropping all their roots at odd times may be caused by soil without good drainage or may be a natural function of the plant when it goes dormant. A thin layer of small gravel between the plant body and the soil seems to help the problem. Here in California the growing times are not constant, so it is necessary to watch them and slow down on your watering when they enter a dormant period.

The "soft" Haworthias (H. cymbiformis - H. obtusa) prefer more shade and water than the "hard" (H. reinwardtii - H. attenuata) or "windowed" (H. retusa - H. tessellata) ones do. The "truncate" (H. truncata - H. maughanii) types need the best drainage and very careful watering.

Finding the correct names for Haworthias may be a problem. Botanists have studied and published their opinions, and, they do not agree as to where a species begins and a variety ends. The problem is made more complex because Haworthias hybridize very easily. The articles and pictures published in the CSSA Journal over the years may help you find and identify your plant.

#### GASTERIA (Duval) Family: Liliaceae

Gasterias are closely related to Aloes and were included in this genus for a while. The name was derived from the flowers which resemble the shape of a stomach (gaster). This genus is also from S.W. Africa and cultivation is much the same as for Haworthias. Gasterias are easier to grow and not as fussy about water or drainage. They will also take more shade than Haworthias will.

The plant leaves are two ranked when immature and form a rosette when older. It may take many years before the spiral begins. This has caused botanical problems as some species flower in their juvenile stage and most look quite different when older. So there may be two or more names for the same plant.

Gasterias can be propagated very easily from leaf cuttings or from offsets. They hybridize with other plants easily and seedlings are seldom true unless great care is taken in pollinating the flowers. Gasterias not only cross-pollinate with themselves but with Haworthias (Gasteria haworthia) and with Aloes (Gastroalea).

G. liliputana is the smallest (three inches) of the genus. G. verrucosa grows to about twelve inches in diameter and has attractive white warts. There are many other species that grow much larger. Perhaps the most unusual is G. armstrongii. The leaves are a rich, dark green and almost as broad as they are long.

Gasterias and Haworthias are in flower this month, so bring a plant to the meeting and share it with us.

## CEREUS-LY SPEAKING:

The convention is over - so many people worked long hours and deserve a special thank you. I personally am greatly indebted to Doris Rake and Edith Werner without whose help it would have been impossible to publish E.y.F. on time. Doris spent an entire weekend - Friday through Sunday - typing and proofreading. Edith helped assemble, address and stamp the finished product. My sincerest thanks, Doris and Edith.

Did I just say the convention is over? But already a new convention is looming in the not so distant future: 1977 in Tuscon, Arizona. Start planning now to attend another great event.

The annual CSSA Show will commence July 4th, 1975, at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, Calif., and last through July 6, 1975. Exhibits must be set up between 9 am and 11 pm, Wednesday, July 2nd and Thursday, July 3rd and must be removed after 5 pm, July 5th.

Talking about coming events: Del Mar Fair time is approaching rapidly, (June 21 through July 4, 1975) and Thomas and Marcia Hamecher, who are chairing our displays this year, need lots of help - volunteers are urgently needed should contact the Hamechers at 440-6245.

And more news: We were saddened to hear that Life Member Mrs. J.R. Conrad, a longtime resident of Coronado, passed quietly away on May 25, 1975.

A thank you to Ve Siegert for taking care of our plant sales table in April during the absence of Reed Pierce.

Rick Latimer is replacing retiring Bette Baker at the plant exchange table. Thank you, Bette, for a job well done.

Wilson Wells reports: The Cerebral Palsy Foundation School Group held its picnic on May 22, 1975, at the Taylors' Nursery. Three busses and a number of cars transported the young adults. There were fifteen wheelchair young adults, four on foot - a total of thirty persons attended the party. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's grandson played us a duet on their electric mandolin and drums. This furnished a fine musical setting in rock music. Mr. Taylor gave each student a potted plant as a leaving gift. A beautiful day and a wonderful picnic.

The Regalement Committee under the Hapeman girls did it again: a delicious snack was provided by Mildred Anderes, Marcelle Barfield, Mary Birchell, Gloria Cavanaugh, Ed Miller (and he is good at flower arrangements too, girls), Thelma O Reilly, Ruth Pemprase, Ruth Richardson and Alberta Widen. Oops, before I forget, this was at our April meeting. Leta Hapeman did her share by remote control: she could not attend that meeting because she had the misfortune to fracture her kneecap in early April. She says the injury is still painful but the knee is gradually improving.

Please note: You may have no problem reading your own handwriting but I may have difficulties in deciphering yours. Please print any change of address.

## CONVENTION NOTES:

Telegram from Cynthia Giddy to the Cactus Convention:  
"All good wishes, much learning and much laughter".

From John Lavranos, Johannesburg, S.Africa:

"Dear Martin,

I have just been looking at the program. It's so real I could close my eyes and be there. I regret so much I cannot be there. Please, if this letter gets to you in time, give my greetings to the convention. I'll do what I can to get back there some time."

Letter from Leo J. Pickoff, President, The Cactus and Succulent Society of America:

"Dear Martin,

For the Board of Directors of CSSA, I want to thank the members of the San Diego C & SS for being such excellent hosts at the Convention. So many willing and cooperative members made the stay in San Diego an enjoyable experience for the out-of-town and out-of-state members of CSSA.

Very little would have been accomplished without the hard working San Diego C & SS. We appreciate what you did for the rest of us, and must say, 'Thank you!''.

I venture to say that the kind thoughts conveyed above contributed to the success of the convention and the appreciation expressed is gratefully accepted.

## ALOE VERA - THE BEAUTIFIER (?). by Audrey Johnson.

When my daughter Jacqueline asked me about Aloe vera and its beneficial effect upon skin allergies, I knew very little about the plant. I kept my ignorance a secret, of course. Delighted that Jacquie was, at last, taking some interest in my favorite hobby, I rushed to Ruth Stanton for further information. Ruth confirmed that the plant could be used externally. "Break off a leaf and rub it on the skin. It also may be used internally," (she knew someone who enjoyed lunch at work and included Aloe vera in his diet). She had given, over a period of time, many of these plants to suffering friends and neighbors. Nevertheless, she did have two plants left, one of which she very generously offered to Jacqueline.

Somehow, with all our summer activities, we never did get around to collecting Aloe vera, and the matter completely slipped my mind until attending last month's meeting of the Palomar Cactus and Succulent Society. There, upon the exchange table, rested a clump of young plants of Aloe vera which I was able to pick up, belatedly remembering my promise to obtain one specimen for Jacqueline. I transferred the plants to the car and we continued on our way to pay a visit to Ruth Stanton in Carlsbad to tell her about our find. Imagine our surprise when she greeted us at the garden gate, spade in hand: "Here, Geoff," she said, "Dig up this plant before I forget it again", pointing to a magnificent large specimen plant of - - Aloe vera! Suddenly, after all this time, we had acquired a whole trunkful of Aloe vera, all in one day.

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ALOE VERA - THE BEAUTIFIER(?), by Audrey Johnson.

Needless to say, Ruth' beautiful plant found a home on our hillside. It looks gorgeous. The clump of smaller plants I divided among Jacqueline and her friends. I am looking forward to seeing some radiant complexions on their next visit here.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE UNUSUAL - IN OUR UNUSUAL PLANTS, by Harry Boersma  
Reprinted from the CSIE of Canada, Dec. 1974.

Cacti and many succulents are unusual in comparison to other plants of this world, and it must be noted that when something goes abnormal with these plants, we have discovered the unusual in unusual plants. Vegetation in general does strange things occasionally, such as growing flattened crested branches on the broom shrub (Cytisus species), or fern fronds may be partly or wholly crested. On some occasions, while driving along our inland highways, I have seen monstrose torch plants (Verbascum thaspus), probably due to herbicide spraying. Many other examples exist in nature, but the cacti and succulents produce the fanciest and weirdest shapes of them all. They may show great monstrosity and crests, or simply produce minor variations or growth forms. A monstrose growth was noticed on a degrafted Cereus which was reproducing just above ground level, while an eight-foot tall single stem of a Monvillea began to split dichotomously, and Selenicereus vagans went corkscrew on some branches.

In the succulents, Gasterias and Haworthias show some irregularities as they sometimes have baby plants on the flower stems instead instead of only near the base of the mother plant, which are much slower in growth than the regular offspring and somewhat more pronounced in variation of color. A South African living stone (Lithops) produced its flower through the side of the plant a few millimeters above the ground instead of in the cleft on top; also the shady side was preferred over the sunny side which made the otherwise regular flower last up to twice as long. Many minor things have shown up in plants, such as Cereus or Trichocereus type plants forming a groove or gap between two ribs at least two to three times the usual width and much deeper than normal. Some Neochilenias act as if stung by a wasp, growing out of proportion to the remaining normal part of the plant. Epiphyllum oxypetalum (syn. E. latifrons), one of the so-called 'Queen of the Night' cacti has produced buds on the very end or tip of the flattened 'leaf' stems, and in these the flower stem and seed capsule are completely smooth in contrast to the unusual flowers which have reddish brown scales as well as whitish hairs.

An Opuntia polyacantha (prickly pear) with stubby but otherwise seemingly normal growth, produces flowers which are quite abnormal and monstrose flattish. An Echinopsis hybrid off and on brings forth golden variegated offsets, a phenomenon which is also taking place in a Stapelia variegata hybrid; but these don't seem to be willing to re-root or be grafted, like the monstrose and crested branches of Stapelia and Huernia, which incidentally can make very fine curiosity plants. There is Crassula obliqua, a form of the Jade plant with more bluntish leaves, and stems which bear a brown wooly or hairy formation on or around the joints, especially visible on the lower part of the stem where the side branches have fallen leaving behind a very knotty trunk with brown wooly rings. This plant is not as vigorous, and produces a deeper shade of pinkish-white flowers,

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## CACTUS OF THE MONTH

### MATUCANA

Dr. George Radwin

The genus Matucana was erected for plants that occur in central Peru, in the region surrounding the town of Matucan, high (8000 feet) in the Andes.

All species now assigned here are globular in form, at least as young plants; several species assume a more or less cylindrical form as they mature (up to 12 inches in height by 4 inches in diameter). The stem is glossy, yellow-green and bears a series of large tubercles, generally aligned into axial ribs. Flowers arise from near the center of the plant at the apex and are trumpet-or funnel-shaped, with a long tube, ranging in color from orange, through red to purple. The flower is zygomorphic (funnel-shaped with two different groups of petals, those of one group shorter and more recurved than those of the other). Blooms are produced at differing seasons, depending on the species and the conditions.

Backeberg has split Matucana into two sub-genera, Matucana and Submatucana. His rationale was the fact that several species have hairy flower tubes and the remainder have widely scattered scales in the same area, the first situation characteristic of Matucana (Submatucana) and the second characteristic of Matucana ss. There are, however, other features by which these two groups can be readily separated. Matucana ss (in a strict sense) features a dense spination, the thin, curving, needle-like spines all but obscuring the stem, and is almost solitary (non-caespitose). Matucana (Submatucana), on the other hand, has a comparatively sparse spination, in some cases virtually without spines (e.g. M.(S.) madisoniorum). Species in this group are characteristically caespitose, the "pups" developing roots while still attached to the parent plant.

Taxonomy is a subject of controversy. Although Matucana species show a globular to cylindrical growth habit, suggesting a relationship with other groups of globular cacti, the flower's zygomorphic form allies them to the group of Borzicactus, Oreocereus, Haageocereus, and Arequipa. Kimnach (1960) has suggested that Matucana and these others be completely submerged in Borzicactus. While this may show the true biological relationships, I prefer to consider these groups to be related at a higher level of classification and to retain these generic names for the sake of clearer understanding.

Culture is comparatively easy but good drainage is essential, as the habitats of most species are the very steep Andean slopes of Central and Southern Peru, areas in which very little, if any water ever stays on the roots of these plants.

MATUCANA ss - haynei, winteri, hystrix, crinifera, yanganucensis, celendinensis, multicolor, etc.

MATUCANA (SUBMATUCANA) - aurantiaca, paucicostata, ritteri, tuberculosa, calliantha, etc.

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Observations on the Unusual, cont'd:

in contrast to the regular Jade which has smoother stems, grows larger and has lighter more relaxed inflorescences. The variegated Jade is a form of Crassula obliqua, and has shown leaf monstrosity by producing not only green foliage on a variegated plant, but also heavy double, siamese-twin effect, deep channelled leaves which are more pronouncedly punctulated than the normal.

In Opuntia erectoclada, the red flowering 'Dominoes' of Argentina, which is a dwarf cactus, several pads each year grow monstrose and crested, although for me propagation of such variations has been difficult. Cuts and pieces of Trichocereus, Cereus, Harrisia, often root along the sides as they are laying on the soil or even when planted in a slanting position. All in all, the unusual in our plants is well worthwhile watching for.

**Augie Pfeiffer**  
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**Return Requested**