

# Espinas y Flores

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

Vol. XII, No. 2.

February, 1977.

FEBRUARY MEETING DATE: Saturday, February 12th, 1977.

PROGRAM:

Hans Britsch, of Vista, will report on "1976 I.O.S. in Spain, and his trip to South Africa". In addition, there will be a representative collection (42 species) of the outstanding Britsch-grown cacti for sale, and auction.

CACTUS OF THE MONTH: ASTROPHYTUM Lemaire.  
SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH: ECHEVERIA.

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I think we are all agreed that January's program: "Everything you wanted to know about Xerophytes, and were afraid to ask" was indeed a winner! With our President, Warren Buckner, as Chairman, and arrangement of the program by Gerald Hamecher, the following panel are to be thanked (and congratulated) for all the information and know-how they passed on to us, so generously.

PANEL

Dr. Lee Phelps,	Shirley Berry
Dan Mahr	Joan Johnson
Dr. Ron Monroe	Gerald Dice

Once again, our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this outstanding program.

Additional thanks go to Lee Phelps for, once again, stepping into the breach, during Madelyn Lee's absence, and taking care of the Succulent of the Month and the bragging plants.

I received the following note from John Myers in connection the disputed name of a plant on last month's Bragging Plant Table:

"Those two look-alike crassulas on the January Brag Plant table that drew conflicting responses on the name ending-- In Lambs, "Illustrated Reference, etc.", page 1073, there is a picture of Crassula mesembryanthemopsis, which appears to be the plants brought to the meeting. In Haage, "Cacti & Succulents", page 75, there is a drawing of Crassula mesembryanthoides, which apparently is a different plant."

Thank you for this information, John, and - congratulations on your election to President of Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society!

REGALEMENT TABLE:

Despite certain problems, last month's refreshments were as delicious as ever, and were thoroughly enjoyed by the rest of us. Our thanks go to the following, who took care of us so beautifully:

Joan Johnson	Betty Athy
Virginia Buckner	Ruth Stockton
Doris Rake	Mrs. Hewitt
Lydia Evans	Alma Moore
Shirley Berry	Frances Johnson
Verna Pasek	Helen Kusumoto

My humblest apology to Edith Billmyer for her non-inclusion in the December list of those providing refreshments, and our belated thanks to her for her wonderful contribution to our Christmas feast!

PLANT SALES TABLE:

A big "Thank-you" to Shirley Berry for her donations to our Plant Sales Table at the January Meeting.

NAME TAGS:

To those of you who have not already acquired name tags, Martin Mooney will be taking orders at this month's meeting. The cost will be: \$2.00 per name tag.

DATE TO REMEMBER:

NATIONAL C.S.S.A. CONVENTION ..... May 16th - 20th.

CACTUS OF THE MONTH:

ASTROPHYTUM Lemaire.

George E. Radwin

One of the earliest named and most easily recognized of cactus genera, Astrophytum comprises only four species from central and eastern Mexico. In addition, the geographical range of one species, A. asterias, extends into the Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

In general, these four species are globular (to cylindrical with great age and size - up to 3 feet tall in A. ornatum), all have ribs, though the typical number differs from species to species, and varies widely within at least one species (A. myriostigma). Stems are dark to pale green, and are more or less covered with many small, white, hairy scales. Two species are virtually spineless (A. asterias and A. myriostigma), and the unobstructed view of the stem shape in each case has suggested an appropriate nickname ("sea-urchin" and "bishop's cap" respectively). The other two species have prominent spines, in each case of distinctive character. A. ornatum has strong, straight, moderately long, yellow or yellow-brown spines, and A. capricorne has long, spiralling or curling, papery brown spines that resemble goats' horns, whence its name.

Flowers are generally yellow to yellow tinged with rusty red-brown. The yellow bloom of A. asterias has a "glowing" red-brown center. The blooms are produced from areoles at the apex of the plant in the warmer months. Under optimal conditions, Astrophytum species will bloom from April to September, but this requires considerable environmental heat. In A. ornatum and possibly other species, cross-pollination is necessary to produce viable seed.

These species are inhabitants of semi-desert areas, and can generally take some temperature extremes, even to the point of withstanding light frost. An exception is A. capricorne, which generally needs protection from frost. Culture is best in loose, rich soil, supplemented with calcium carbonate. In warm weather, liberal watering is indicated, but large, fully mature plants do not require much water at any time.

Although only four species have been recognized, the natural variability in growth form of A. myriostigma and A. capricorne have inspired a multitude of varietal names, as for atypical rib-counts, or some unusual feature of the scale distribution. In addition, many beautiful spontaneous greenhouse hybrids of A. myriostigma and A. capricorne have found their way into collections.

## SUCCULENT OF THE MONTH:

ECHEVERIA.

Madelyn Lee

Family: Crassulaceae.

This lovely genus originates mainly in Mexico and Central America. A few species can be found in South America, and one is from Texas.

Echeverias are high mountain plants. They grow in thin layers of leaf mold on rocks, cliffs, and steep slopes, at an elevation of 3,000 to 14,000 feet. They are usually found in pine, oak, or juniper forests, or sheltered by low bushes. Their growing range receives up to ten inches of rain in the Summer, and is dry the rest of the year, except for cloud mist.

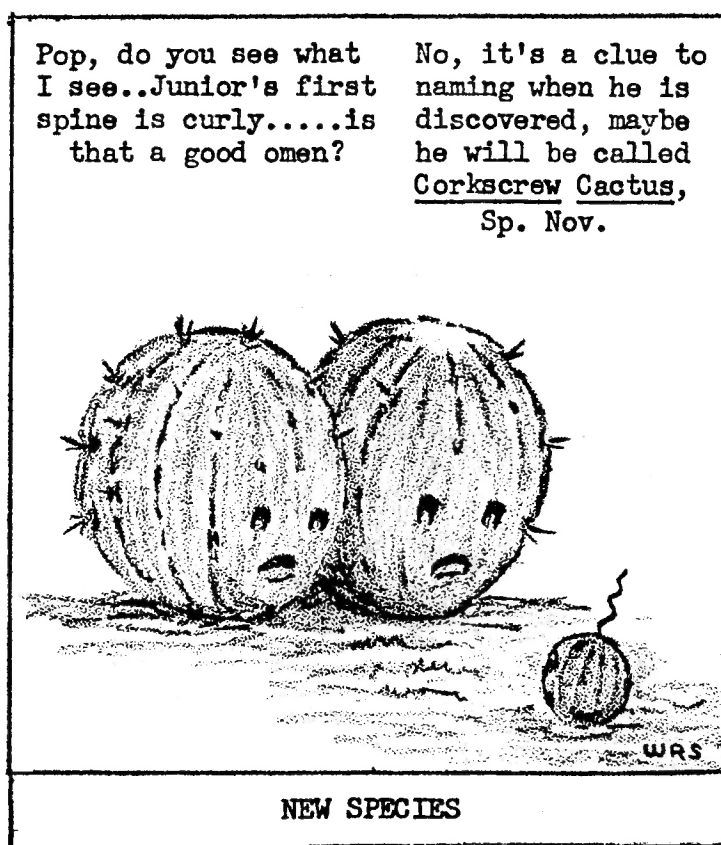
The rosette-shaped plants come in many colors, from deep red-purple to alabaster green. The smallest is only about an inch wide, and the giants can reach 36 inches in diameter. The individual leaves on a species can range from sharp-pointed to a broad shovel shape. Most of the plants have a smooth, waxy texture, but many are either covered with fine hairs, or have hair on the edges of the leaves. The species fall into two broad types of plants. One type grows large 'cabbage' type heads, seldom offsets, and acquires a long thick stem. The other type offsets readily, has tight rosettes, and grows no heavy stem.

Growing Echeverias is not difficult if you keep in mind a few 'rules of thumb'.

- (1) Shade plants from the hot afternoon sun. They seldom grow in full sun in the wilds, and resent hot, dry areas when under cultivation. Place plants where they receive morning sun and have some shade in the afternoon.
- (2) Echeverias love water in the Summer. Give them a good, rich, loose soil, and water at least once a week during their growing season. In the Winter, when they are dormant, give them enough water so that the root ball never gets dry.
- (3) Their leaves are covered with a wax-like substance. This conserves moisture, and enhances the color tones. Wetting agent, or too much overhead watering removes the coating and destroys much of the color.
- (4) Echeverias hate chemicals and insecticides when they are warm. This species does attract aphids and mealy-bugs. If you use an overhead method, or spray the plant while it is in the sun, you will burn the plant and do more harm than the bugs. Water the soil in the pot with a good systemic, and let the plant kill its own bugs! If you have to wet the leaves, do it when the plant is cool (in the morning, or on a cloudy day), and rinse the plant with clear water after 15 or 20 minutes.

- (5) If the plant is one of the stem forming types, cut its head off every Spring. A tall stem seems to restrict the growth of the rosette. You eliminate an old root system and the insects and other problems that go with them. Dry the cutting in a shady place, and re-root it in its new container. The plant will produce a new, healthy root system in about 3 weeks. The old stem will produce several new plants, which can be removed when they are about 3 ins. in diameter, and rooted.
- (6) The plants will tell you when they are unhappy. They will change color, drop leaves, get brown patches, and inform you in no uncertain terms that they don't like where they are or the treatment they are receiving.

February is the best month for high color in your Echeverias. Bring one to the meeting.



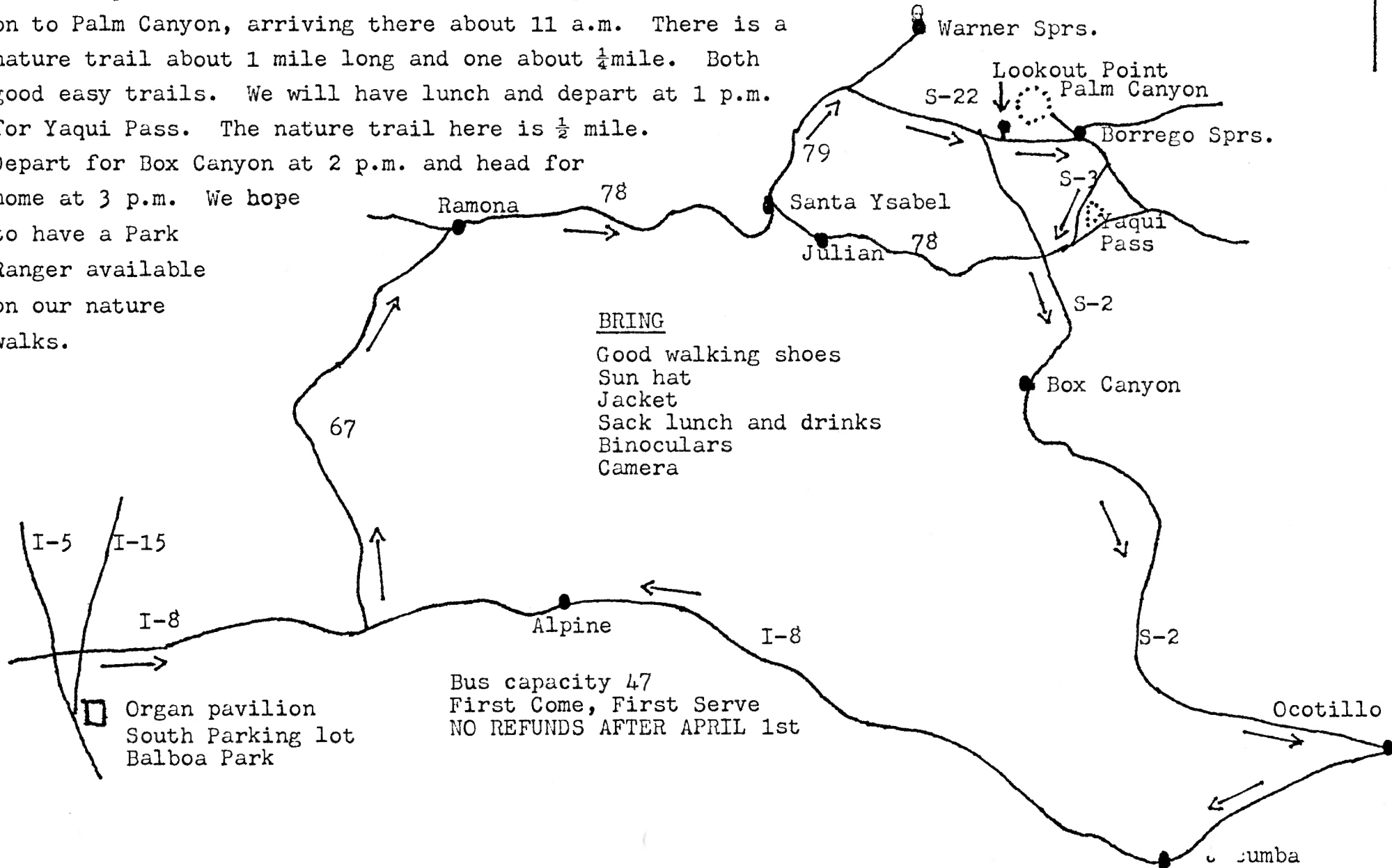
# BUS TRIP ANZA-BORREGO DESERT STATE PARK

23 APRIL 1977 8 AM TO 6 PM \$5.50 EACH

FOR INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS SEE MARTIN L. MOONEY

Board bus at 7:45, organ pavilion parking lot. The bus WILL DEPART AT 8 A.M.  
First stop will be at Lookout Point (see map for route) and on to Palm Canyon, arriving there about 11 a.m. There is a nature trail about 1 mile long and one about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile. Both good easy trails. We will have lunch and depart at 1 p.m. for Yaqui Pass. The nature trail here is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. Depart for Box Canyon at 2 p.m. and head for home at 3 p.m. We hope to have a Park Ranger available on our nature walks.

(9)



INTEREST FINDER

Name City Telephone No.

(The term 'succulent' is meant to include cactus in the  
questionnaire.)

1. How many years have you been growing succulents?.....
2. What is your particular interest (genus or family)?.....
3. What kinds of programs in the past have been of greatest  
interest to you?.....
4. What type of program would you like to see more of in  
the future?.....
5. What kinds of activities related to your interest in growing  
succulents would you like the club to sponsor?  
Field trips? .....
6. Would you be willing to set up a Display of the Month  
Table with your plants?.....
7. Would you be willing to serve on a Committee? (You name it.).....
8. What kinds of services, or products, would you like to have  
made available to you through the Club?.....
9. Are you a member of the Cactus & Succulent Society of  
America? (You are if you are a subscriber to their Journal.).....
10. Do you think that it would be a good idea to make subscribing to  
the Journal mandatory for membership in this Club? (S.D.C.S.S.).....
11. List some suggestions for improvement of our Club.....
12. What things are being done that you would like to see  
continued?.....
13. How long have you been a member of this Club?.....
14. How do you feel about our exhibit at the Fair each June?.....
15. Would you contribute your time to setting up this exhibit?.....
16. In what way can our Club help you to increase your benefits  
and enjoyment from your interest in succulents?.....

After one successful struggle in 1975 (to retain our rural zoning and not to be changed to "urban"), and another in 1976 (to prevent annexation to Escondido), we, in our little valley, were quite prepared to have new battles to fight in 1977. It transpired, however, that we were not to have even that amount of peace and tranquility.

Some three weeks before Christmas we, and a few close neighbours, received notice that the hitherto open land on the hillside above our property had been sold and earmarked for a housing project of 22 houses, upon 24 acres of land. There was to be a Hearing before the Planning Commission, where we could air our objections, if any. We held a hasty Committee meeting of the valley homeowners, and later put our objections before the Commission, to no avail. We were then left with no alternative but to appeal to the Board of Supervisors, and this we decided to do. Somehow, we managed to do this (in the midst of our diverse preparations for Christmas), and the second Hearing was held on the 19th January, just last week.

Our objections to the housing project were many and varied, with my own veering strongly towards the conservation aspect. Moreover, I did emphatically agree that 22 homes, appearing all at one time, would inevitably have a very definite environmental impact upon our little valley of some 850 acres, where, at present, there are only 93 homes and properties scattered throughout the entire area. The residents of the valley below (already very soggy during the rainy seasons) would certainly suffer severely from the extra drainage off the hillside.

The members of the Board of Supervisors were, I must admit, very sympathetic to our cause, and they actually gave us a whole hour in which to make our presentations. To my surprise, my conservation presentation was received with great interest, as were my photographs, and I actually managed to bring to light the fact that only 40% of the 22 sites had received percolation tests. This seemed to surprise, and shock, the entire Board. However, despite their sympathetic leanings, the Board finally (and reluctantly, it seemed to me) approved the housing project - with a couple of amendments. Each individual site now has to have a "perc." test before building commences - this, we hope will eliminate quite a number on this rocky, hilly territory - and the live oaks and stand of eucalyptus trees adjoining our property, which I asked to be preserved, are not to be touched by the construction workers.

Geoff and I have already transferred many of the beautiful native dudleyas from this area to our own property, and we feel that we have sufficient of the local mimulus and great variety of other wildflowers on our land to ensure their survival. I also have a number of areas where I have naturalized the California poppy, and I am hoping that, one especially rainy Spring, they will spread farther afield.

At this moment, we are awaiting further developments!

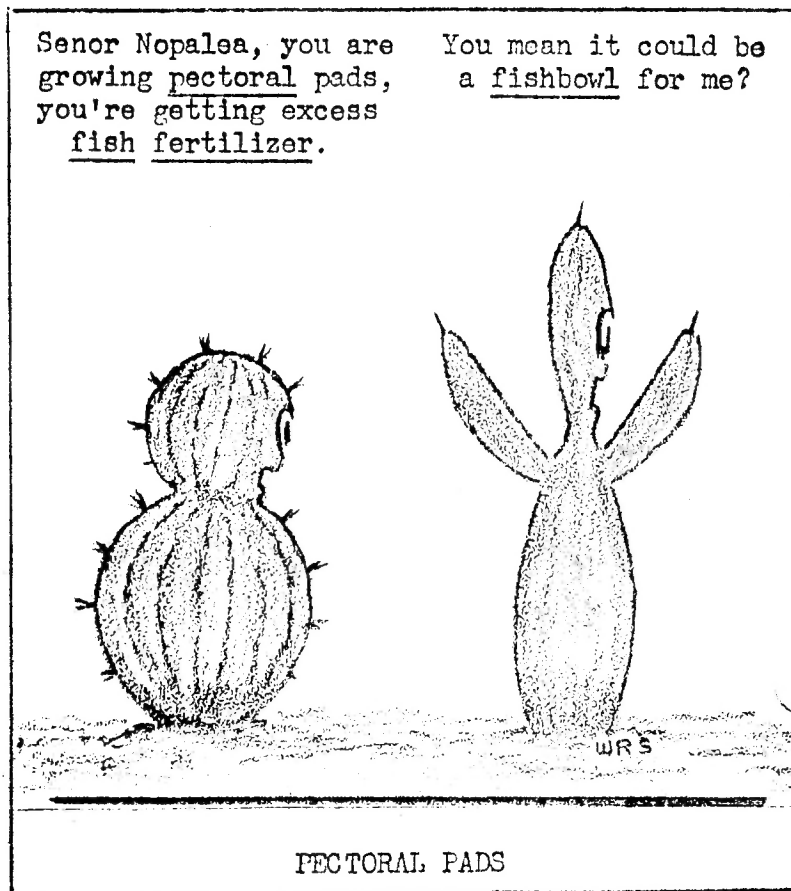


Postscript:

Christmas was not a happy time for the Johnsons, this year. In addition to our problems with the valley, and those dealing with the printing of "Espinass y Flores", we were to lose our beloved Scottish terrior, Jacquot, on December 28th. We had owned Jacquot (perhaps I should say, we had had the privilege of taking care of Jacquot, since one could never "own" a Scottish terrior) since he was 8 weeks old, and he would have been 9 years in February. He was, therefore, truly one of the family.

The tragic way in which this came about, hit us all very hard, and we haven't yet recovered from the blow. The fact is, Jacquot went off to roam the hillsides a week or so before Christmas, and returned, 36 hours later, more dead than alive, and badly mauled by the coyotes. After several days of care at the Animal Hospital in Escondido, we were able (joyfully) to attend to his needs at home, and, for a while, he appeared to be recovering beautifully. On Christmas Eve, however, he started a series of fits, and Geoff and I were up with him most of the night. He became worse on Christmas Day, and had to be rushed back to Hospital where, with the assistance of a devoted and dedicated Vet, he put up a gallant fight for his life. The treatment was not successful, however, and, three days later, we had the sad task of asking that he be put to sleep to curtail his sufferings.

We all miss Jacquot sorely, and, I'm afraid, we always will..



Since Audrey and I took over the joint editorship of "Espinass y Flores" with the September, 1976 issue, I have concerned myself with the Managing Editor (M.E.) functions, such as lay-out, collation, printing, mailing list etc., leaving the writing of articles to Audrey (Is that all I do?....Ye Lady Ed.) and our host of "technical expert" contributors. Occasionally, Audrey allows me to type small articles (When I get really desperate!....Y.L.Ed.), but after my mis-spelling of 'calendar' twice in the January issue, I am currently on restriction. (A likely story - guess who does the typing.....Ye L. Ed.)

In my capacity as M.E., I read the bulletins we receive from various Cactus and Succulent Clubs around the country, and, from time to time, we have found a number of fascinating and interesting articles therein. In this and future issues, therefore (when time and space permit), I will report on some of these which I think will be of interest to our readers.

With the permission of Joyce West, we are reproducing the following article which she wrote for "Cactus Chatter", the bulletin of the OREGON CACTUS SOCIETY, in January of this year. (I'm sure you will enjoy Joyce's article and ideas!....Y.L.Ed.)

IDEAS FOR CATALOGING AND TRACKING  
THE PROGRESS OF YOUR CACTI.

Joyce West

I'd like to share some ideas about cataloging and tracking the progress of your cacti. Maybe some of them are already familiar to you. I keep a 3 by 5" file box, with a card for each of my plants. At the top left corner is the Latin name for the cactus, and I keep the cards in alphabetical order by name. Some of the information I've recorded is - the date and place that I obtained the plant, and its initial size (I thought in the future this may be interesting). I also include the main group of cactus (called the phylum?), and the country of origin....for example, an Astrophytum Asterias belongs to the Echinocactus family and comes from Mexico. The rest of the card is devoted to information about cultivation. I've been copying quotes from the reference books about what type of soil is necessary, trace minerals, and any special requirements, for example, to prepare it for Winter. I thought that I'd keep the back of the card for making notes on any special tricks I learn about growing that plant, when it blooms, how many flowers, etc.

Also, another part of my system is a little code I've devised that tells me about its requirements. I put the code on both the 3 x 5 card and on each plant tag so that I know its needs at a glance, without always going back to the file box. The code is three positions long. The first position tells how often to water it, the second position is the minimum temperature it can stand, and the third position is the type of light needed. The initials are used as follows:

<u>WATERING</u>	<u>TEMPERATURE MINIMUM</u>	<u>SUNLIGHT</u>
F - Frequent	3 - 30 degrees F.	S -- Sunny
A - Average	4 - 40 degrees F.	P -- Partial
D - Dry	Etc.	F -- Filtered

For example, I'd use a code of A4S for an Opuntia Microdasys (Average Water, 40 degrees Minimum Temperature, full sunlight), or for an Ariocarpus Fissuratus, a D3S. A Melocactus Matanzanus is a A6S, because it should be kept warmer than most cacti.

I'd really be interested in hearing comments or suggestions, and also about how other people grow their cacti!

SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OFFICERS.

PRESIDENT - H. Warren Buckner, 1744 Engelwood Dr., Lemon Grove,  
Ca. 92045. 469-1391  
First V.P. - Tom Hamecher, 996 Terrace Crest, El Cajon,  
Ca. 92020. 440-6245  
Second V.P. - Gerald Dice, 3354 Mohican Ave., San Diego,  
Ca. 92117. 276-2589  
RECORDING SECRETARY - Doris F. Rake, 4410 38th St., San Diego,  
Ca. 92116. 282-1722  
TREASURER - Russel Evans, 3115 Nile, San Diego,  
Ca. 92104. 284-5859  
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY - Betty Athy, 7220 Baldrich St., La Mesa, Ca. 92041. 469-7647  
PAST PRES. - Martin L. Mooney, 97 K St., Chula Vista, Ca. 92011. 427-6796

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

One year term: John Pasek and Perlso Lewis.  
Two year term: Shirley Berry and Julianne Rice.  
Three " " Joan Johnson and Ricky Latimer.

COMMITTEES FOR 1977

ACTIVITIES - Martin Mooney.  
EDUCATION - Madelyn Lee, Succulents.  
Dr. George E. Radwin Cacti (Research).  
Tony D'Atillio Cacti.  
EXHIBITS - ?  
LIBRARY - Edith Werner, Pat Mooney and Helen Hegyi.  
MEMBERSHIP - Russel Evans.  
PLANTS & SUPPLIES - Gerald Dice.  
PROGRAMS - Tom Hamecher.  
PUBLICATION - Audrey and Geoff Johnson.  
RECEPTION - Perlso Lewis.  
REGALEMENT - ?  
HISTORIAN - Ricky Latimer.  
Reps. to S.D. Botanical Garden Foundation - Mr. and Mrs. Robert Anders.  
Rep. to S.D. Floral Association - Verna Pasek.

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:

Second Saturday of each month, 1.30 p.m., Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, unless otherwise indicated. Board convenes after the general meeting.

DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH ISSUE: February 22nd...PLEASE!

AND SO TO BED.....30.

**Audrey Johnson**  
1226 Citracado Pky.  
Escondido, CA 92025  
Address Correction Requested