

# Espinas y Flores

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

Vol. XIII, No. 2.

February, 1978

FEBRUARY MEETING DATE: Saturday, February 11th, 1978.

PROGRAM:

"DESERT AND TROPICAL FLOWERS"

BY: ARTHUR SWEZEY

Arthur Swezey, who will present our program for February, is a new member of the Club, and also belongs to Palomar Cactus & Succulent Society. It is encouraging to have such an enthusiastic new member join our ranks, and we hope to hear a great deal more about him in the future. Welcome, Arthur, to the Club!

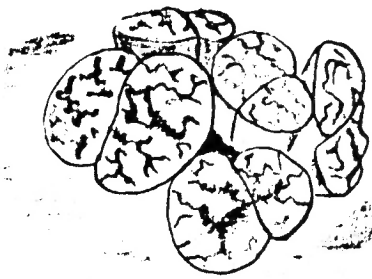
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Editors Note:

Once again we seem to have a very full issue, and consequently had to omit the "Officers and Directors" page. Also we will leave till next month the 'Editorial Committee' Report which should have been published in January.

DEADLINE FOR MARCH ISSUE.....February 20th. PLEASE!



# Succulent of the Month

WINTER STONES  
(Mesembryanthemum)

Before I get into the 'winter stones', I have to make two announcements. First, the succulent-of-the-month for June has been changed from Sedum to Dudleya. Second, I should mention the story behind the new title above. Mr. Geof Johnson requested that I design something along the line of say "Observations by Dr. Phillip Corliss". So, I needed a plant that should not be too hard to draw (unlike *Pachypodium geayi* or *Euphorbia pseudocactus*), should represent as many species as possible, and/or might have certain symbolic attributes. If I were a physician, I might have chosen *Aloe barbadensis* (vera). If I were a cowboy or a bartender, I might have chosen an *Agave sisalina* or *americana*. Since my second hobby (dormant) is mineralogy, suggests selecting one of the living rocks or flowering stones. Yet, one has to realize that there is not merely a lithop clump in the logo! First it is a thick (*Crassula*) one and a low (*Aloe*) one. Next, it is not a single head, but a composite (*Senecio*) of several heads. Also, "stones" are likened to jewels (Sp. *Hoya* = *Asclepiaceae*). Finally, the meaning of the term *Mesembryanthemum* can be stretched to the limits when reinterpreted to have similar sentiment to the term *philadelphia*. Thus, we pretty well have all the succulents (except for cactus) represented in one compact symbol!

While we are still on the subject of Lithops, I should mention that, in general, they are not the plant-of-the-month until August. However there are a few of them (e.g. *L. optica rubra* and *L. marmorata*) that are winter growers.

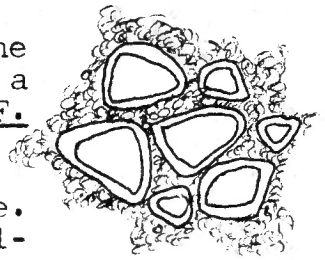
The winter active/summer dormant Mesembs that are February's succulent-of-the-month are such because their native habitats (generally Namaqualand to Namib desert-coastal South-West Africa) receive winter rains (if any) and hot and arid summers. Areas to the east get summer rains and winter drought and contain representatives of our August succulent-of-the-month.

The genus *Conophytum* has numerous members. The growing season is often announced when the flower pushes up through the dried remains of the old leaves. They seem to require less sun than most of the Mesembs. Although most grow in crevices near the tops of mountain ridges where they get some shading, many are found in the open with no protection. Flowers may be white, yellow, pink, or purple.

*Argyroderma* means silver skin. This genus is confined to the Van Rhynsdorp district and is found nowhere else. Flower coloration varies from deep golden to light plum. Heavy watering may cause the plant to split in the winter, instant mush in the summer.

The genus Titanopsis (Greek titanos=chalk, opsis=like) is found scattered from the southern Kalahari to the northern edge of the Great Karoo. The plants look like either limestone outcroppings, a pile of warts, or sparkling jewels in the early morning sun when covered with dew; depending perhaps upon the attitude of the viewer. Titanopsis calcarea puts forth its fragrant yellow flowers in January and February.

The genus Fenestraria (Latin for window) shares the common name of "Baby Toes" with the genus Frithia and a few Sedum species. The two species F. aurantiaca and F. rhopalophylla inhabit a small area along the coast, where they grow almost completely buried in the sand. They depend heavily upon the coastal fogs for moisture. I water mine when they just begin to show some shriveling.



*fenestraria in nature*  
(TOP VIEW)

From the Little Karoo comes the genus Gibbaeum (Latin for hump). One leaf is always slightly taller than the other (reason?) The plants flower from February to April depending upon the species. Flowers may be white through purple. Some species form large clumps like G. petrense. G. cryptopodium plants have shiny yellow-green bodies. G. album's skin has a close cropped, fuzzy texture with a whitish grey color.

Other winter-growing flowering stones genera are: Aloinopsis, Astridia, Didymaotus, Dactyloopsis, Muiria, Oophytum, Ophthalmophyllum, and Monilaria. There is a rather thin line between the stones and the more shrubby plants. I think enough genera are included here however. Yet I feel we will need at least a third month (probably November 1979) to cover the choice Mesembs that are shrubbier like Cheiridopsis (winter), Trichodiadema (fall-winter), Mitrophyllum (fall), Faucaria (summer), etc.

#### REFERENCES:

- Barnes, Keith, "Mesembs", House Plants & Porch Gardens, (January, 1978), pp. 60-73.  
Storms, Ed, Growing the Mesembs, pp.1, 2, 9-23.

#### More Conservation

Jim Dice

For anyone whose interest may have been piqued by Gary Lyons' talk on conservation at the January meeting, you might wish to read two of his earlier articles on the same subject, in the July-August 1972 (vol. 44, no. 4) and July-August 1976 (vol. 48, no. 4) issues of the Cactus and Succulent Journal.

In addition, the January, 1978 volume of Fremontia (available in our library) is devoted entirely to the rare plants of California and has several excellent articles, including one by Reid Moran on "The Resurrection of Dudleya traskiae", a Santa Barbara Island endemic thought to be extinct in the wild since 1970, but now back among the living; Tom Oberbauer's "San Diego County and Its Rare Plants"; and one by Edward Hasty, State Director of the Bureau of Land Management, on the "BLM's Plant Preservation Policies".

THE CHRISTMAS OF 1977 - IN THE  
BACK COUNTRY.

Audrey Johnson

Once again the Holiday Season has come and gone, although (as housewife and mother of the family) I sometimes wonder about the "holiday" part of this expression!

Christmas this year in the Back Country might best be described by the one word: WEATHER, since this was very much in the forefront of our minds throughout the entire period, in just about every shape and form. The worst part came earlier on, just at the height of the pre-Christmas rush (as I'm sure you all know) in the form of devastating winds, with a great deal of damage to fruit crops and precious trees, not too far from our locality. Surprisingly enough, in our little valley we were extremely lucky, and received no more than our usual gusty winds, with little or no damage. When, however, later we visited friends on the other side of Escondido (the Valley Center end), we were dismayed to find that we had to pick our way to their door through a tangle of large fallen tree branches, and to see the many broken and leaning trees in that area!

After the winds, of course, came a deluge of rain, and this has continued through Christmas and the New Year, with very short periods of sunshine. As a matter of fact, at the time of writing, there are "threats", or promises, of more to come. Sometimes, when a little depressed by all the wetness and dull days, I ask myself: "Does it all have to come at once?", after which I remind myself to be thankful, and to take it when it comes... Anyhow, it has been a relief to have Nature take care of our heavy watering chores for awhile, and the way that everything in the garden has perked up in the moist air has surely been a "sight for sore eyes":

Actually, Geoff and I found little time to do the gardening chores we had hopefully anticipated until after the New Year, and by that time the earth had been well and truly soaked. A cheery fire and a gaily decorated Christmas tree had kept us reasonably happy indoors until last weekend, when, suddenly, - the sun shone, and we straightway rushed out to plant: three trees and a vine, acquired at the Quail Gardens Christmas Sale. Our previously hard-baked soil was now beautifully pliable, and we completed our labours with the good feeling that these particular plantings had the best possible chance of success. Before returning indoors, we dallied for a moment at the ornamental pond to feed our hitherto flourishing goldfish, only to find several of their poor little bodies floating on the surface, very dead. Yet another mystery and problem to be solved when the weather improves...

Being something of an outdoors person (as you may have guessed), prolonged periods of indoor living are apt to get me down. However, I was able to mix, and enliven, those tedious indoor tasks with attendance upon my indoor plants and my ever-increasing collection of birds. My most exciting (totally unexpected) Christmas present from Geoff this year arrived two days after Christmas. It was: a pair of zebra finches - the most fascinating little fellows - housed in a charming tall, pagoda-shaped, wicker cage. I now have: Fred, my friend, the Cockatiel, a pair of parakeets, and the little newcomers, and we

have recently decided to try to increase the numbers by breeding the keets and finches ourselves! About this, we know little or nothing, but we're more than willing to learn. More news about this later - especially should we be lucky enough to succeed!!

Thinking back, I remember we tried to breed our parakeets once before, but all they did was industriously tear the wicker nest to pieces and strew it around the cage. The next morning, it looked for all the world like New Year's Eve! This time, we have been more sensible and obtained a wooden nesting box for the parakeets, which is what we should have done in the first place, I understand. In the meantime, my dear little finches are having a grand time, leaping onto and off from their wicker nest with great abandon! Last night we were fascinated to see both finches squatting on the bottom of the cage, with a few rather tatty pieces of yarn sticking out from under the female. Could it be (I wondered) that the male was a lazy character who had said (in effect): "Oh, to heck with it - that will do the job!". Fearfully we watched for broken eggs, as the female arose to eat and drink. Not a single egg, whole or otherwise, did we see, but, perhaps they are getting the idea - at least we hope so.

Somehow, we <sup>manage</sup> did two short trips to Nurseries during the Holidays, I'm happy to say, one of which was to Fallbrook, on one isolated sunny afternoon. Here we visited two of Ruth Stanton's old friends - one at Johnson's, and the other at Fred Wright's Nursery in De Luz Canyon. At Johnson's, I acquired a particularly beautiful silvery plant, a hybrid of "Horrida"!, brought back from Africa. At Fred Wright's Nursery, Ruth and I were fascinated anew by his gorgeous echevarias, especially those hybridized by himself. After some deliberation, we came away with a number of new additions to our ever-growing collection. Even after battling with the elements, echevarias grow so colorfully and rapidly here in Escondido, that I just can't resist them. However, they do grow to quite a size, and they take up a lot of room, which, fortunately, I have.

Yesterday, as a final treat, we made another quick trip to Modlin's of Vista. What a thrill to gaze upon his great variety of beautiful cacti, flourishing so splendidly - and how does he get them to develop so much lovely white "hair"? I never did find out. Difficult as it was to chose, I did finally manage to tear myself away with just one, irresistible, plant of Mamm. Parkinsonii, which looked exactly like a quite delicious Christmas or birthday cake, surmounted by a circle of pink candles (the flowers, of course). It made a very suitable finish to the Holiday Season, I felt.

And now, back to work. My first job - to get "EyF" on its way to Y'all.

T.T.F.N.

Audrey J.

JANUARY 26TH:

The preceding was written last month, but, owing to lack of space, had to be omitted. Since you will all doubtlessly be hearing about my latest acquisitions during the coming months, I thought you might like to read it anyway. Better late than never!

A.J.

## Cactus-of-the-Month

### Oreocereus

Dr. Ronald E. Monroe

Oreocereus or mountain cereus was originally established by Riccobono for O. celsianus which was formerly included under the old and ill-defined genus, Pilocereus, because of the very hairy appearance of the latter species.

Although Britton and Rose (1937) recognized only one species (O. celsianus), Borg (1959) listed five distinct species and several varieties (O. celsianus, O. fossulatus, O. trollii, O. hendricksenianus and O. doelzianus). More recently, Krainz (1967) reduced these species to merely varieties of O. celsianus; therefore, until further revision occurs, should it ever occur, the genus is to be considered as consisting of O. celsianus (plus six varieties) and O. doelzianus.

Members of the genus are found growing on the eastern slopes of the Andes from Peru, Bolivia, and Chile. They are cacti of small or medium height (ca. 1 m), branching from the base and often forming large clumps. The stems are stout, with 9 to 17 rounded ribs which are slightly notched, with large oval areoles bearing a cluster of slender radiating spines (brown to yellow). From the areoles grow long, silky white, red or yellow hairs, often hiding the stems completely. There is no pseudocephalium. Flowers are red, small and diurnal with a narrow tube.

These plants require a warm, sunny and airy location, and a well drained sandy and stony soil. A mixture often used by specialists is one-half sand and one-half potting soil which has been greatly enriched with leaf mold. Although many would consider these plants to be grown only in greenhouses, the best looking specimens I have ever seen were cultivated outside, in the sun, and in large redwood pots (at least one foot square and larger if available). These species have better "shaped" growth if they are given more "root room" during their younger growing period. Feed only during the growing period, twice monthly with Miracle-Gro or once at the beginning of the growing season with slow release Ferti-pearls.

Because the plants are usually clothed in dense hair, pests, if present, often go undetected. Even so, mealy bugs appear to be the main pest and easily controlled by Cygon · 2E. Plants grown as solitary specimens seldom have pests detrimental to the plant.

Propagation is easy from seed or by rooted cuttings.

#### References Cited

- Borg, J. 1959. Cacti. Blandford Press, England. pp. 154-156.
- Britton, N. L. and J. N. Rose. 1937. The Cactaceae. Dover Publ., Inc., New York. Vol. II, pp. 171-172.
- Krainz. 1967. Stadtliche Sukkulentsammlung Zurich Katalog. p.98.

## Plant Sales

The Plant Sales Committee wishes to thank those members who took the time to fill out our questionnaires at the December and January meetings. Although the response was meager (17 were returned) we would like to take this opportunity to respond to those suggestions, comments, and questions we received.

Five of the seventeen replies expressed satisfaction in all areas and we wish to thank them for their votes of confidence. Other comments or suggestions which we are seriously looking into include increasing the number of succulents for sale; the sale of some books (we need specific suggestions); more fertilizers (again specific requests are needed); and the sale of the common red clay pots (we've had one request and need more support from members for the idea).

The suggestions which we have no plans to take any action on at this time are the sale of pesticides and soil mix. We feel that there is a great deal of responsibility attached to the sale and use of pesticides and at present we are not prepared to accept any such responsibility for the sale, transportation and storage of these items. Besides, these are readily available from commercial sources. As for soil, it's our feeling that most members have developed their own particular mix after much trial and error and would not be likely to purchase one that we would sell at a higher cost. (The soil mix recommendations of some members have appeared in previous issues of Espinas y Flores.)

To the person who urged us to cut all of our prices: we have tried in all cases to keep the mark-up over our cost as low as possible and still maintain our operation as a money-making venture for the society. The best thing to do if the prices are too high is to withhold your patronage (nothing drives prices down any faster). To the person who wanted a way to advertise for plants they wished to purchase: we suggest you send your list (provided it's not too lengthy) to Audrey and Geoff and have them print it in the Barter Box section of the next Espinas y Flores, or put your list on the bulletin board at the meetings.

Finally, for those who gave suggestions concerning activities, programs, and the plant exchange table, we will try and pass these along to the chairmen of those committees, but for best results you should make your feelings known to them personally.

We thank you again for taking the time to share your ideas, thoughts, and suggestions with us. It is important to us that you make your feelings known, as it is the only indication we have of what you would like and what kind of job we are doing.

The Plant Sales Committee

## ROOTS

Warren Buckner

I've never been a believer in serendipity, my own experience has been that fortunate discoveries were usually the result of diligent searching and much effort. Happily I have now joined "The Three Princes of Serendip".

About the middle of November I received a note from Shirley Berry suggesting that we honor past presidents by a series of articles on these worthies in Espinas y Flores. My reaction was "You've come up with another good idea Shirley; now who are the past presidents?". Since my experience is limited to almost ten years I called Perlso Lewis who promised to dig into her memory and files. That night I was reading old issues of "Cactus and Succulent Journal" and was almost asleep when WOW! SERENDIPITY!!!.

In the "Affiliate Column" by Murray Skinner in the May-June issue of 1962 I read:

"The San Diego C.&S. Society meets the first Saturday of the month, 2 p.m., at Lemon Grove Youth Center, and the third Thursday 8 p.m., at Floral Building, Balboa Park, San Diego. President, C. Hardin; Vice President, H.B. Caulk; Sect., Mrs. Wm. Hoffman; Treas., W.H. Wier. By alternating their meeting times, this group makes it possible for both day and night attendance."

A call to Cleovis Hardin and a subsequent letter from Perlso has nailed down the presidents list as well as a list of editors of the society publication.

	<u>President</u>	<u>Editor</u>
1961	Cleoves Hardin	
1962	Cleoves Hardin	
1963	Harry Calk	
1964	William Hoffman	
1965	William Nelson	* Mr. and Mrs. Jack Ward
1966	Dr. Reuben Vaughan	*#Mr. and Mrs. Jack Ward
1967	Dr. Reuben Vaughan	Jim Stalsonburg
1968	Dr. Reuben Vaughan	Jim Stalsonburg
1969	Walter Greenwood	Jim Stalsonburg
1970	James Stalsonburg	Mike Buckner
1971	Ione Hubner	Nibby Klinefelter
1972	August Pfeiffer	Walter Scott
1973	William Nelson	Walter Scott
1974	Loyal Bibbey	Walter Scott
1975	Martin Mooney	Augie Pfeiffer
1976	Martin Mooney	Note (1)

\* Cactus y Suculentos published from August 1965 thru Sept. 1966.  
# Espinas y Flores first issue December 1966, editor Stalsonburg.  
Note (1)

Pfeiffer was editor thru June 1976

Mooneys were editors for July & August 1976

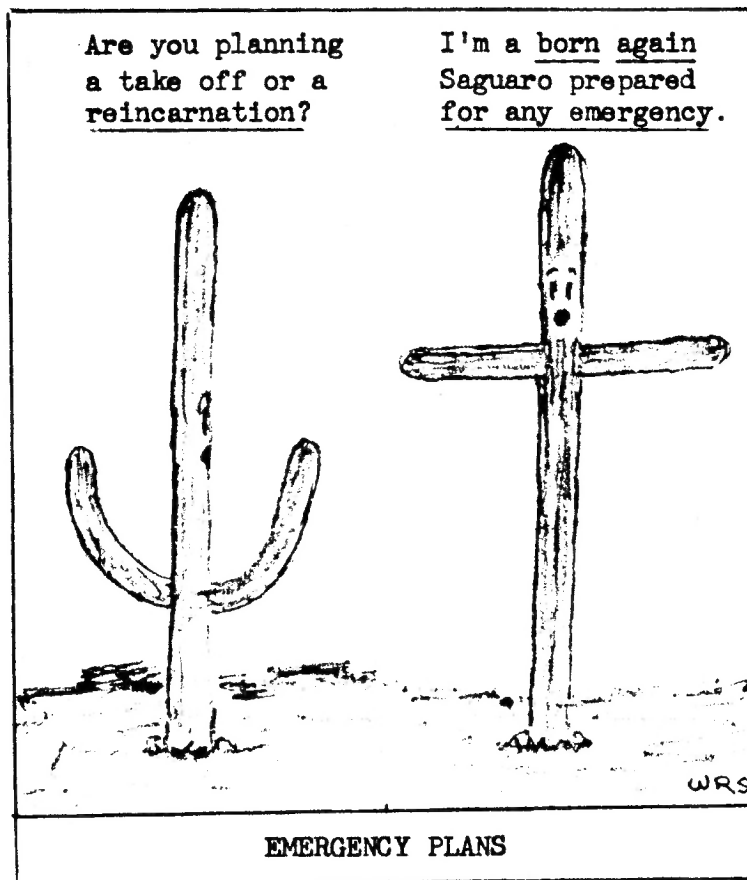
Audrey Johnson editor from September 1976 to date

The first meeting in Lemon Grove was organized by Cleoves Hardin (Hardin's Cactus Garden in Spring Valley) to provide a club for San Diego and avoid the "long" trip to Escondido where the Palomar C.&S.S. were and are still meeting. Thats right, Palomar is older than the



San Diego C. & S. Society. This first meeting was apparently held in May 1971, no one I've contacted remembers the date; the only reference I have found is in the April 1967 Espinas y Flores where the editor comments that next month the club will start its seventh year.

Mr. Hardin recollects that there were nine or ten people at the first meeting; Mr. & Mrs. Hardin, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Taylor, Mr. & Mrs. Harry Calk three or four women that he doesn't remember. I haven't found a list of charter members; this charter group was apparently everyone joining the society in the first year. I would appreciate any information, hints or material on our "ROOTS".



CACTUS COLLECTION FOR SALE

APPROXIMATELY 200 POTTED CACTI of about the same number of species as a collection or group---price negotiable.

May be seen by appointment---Walter Scott, 3430 Wilshire Ter.  
San Diego, CA. 92104-----phone 296-6022.

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## Conservation: It Begins at Home

Jim Dice

After listening to all the discussion of recent months on the topic of conservation, I feel we are overlooking an area where our society could have its greatest effect: on the local level. While I am in whole-hearted agreement with the current efforts in the field of conservation on the national and international levels, I think the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society's active involvement here in our own backyard is overdue. With a few exceptions, our efforts in the area of local conservation have been noticeably lacking during the past few years. In addition to adopting a code of conduct and discouraging field collection of material for commercial purposes, it is essential to the survival of our native cacti and succulents that we as an organization take an active interest in their habitat preservation.

No less than fifteen of San Diego County's native cacti or succulents appear in the California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. The majority of these occur in the western portion of the county where they lie directly in the path of our burgeoning population. As land development continues at a rapid pace, the numbers of such plants as Ferocactus viridescens, the Coast Barrel Cactus, and tiny Dudleya variegata are declining at an alarming rate. It was even suggested to us by Mitch Beauchamp, a few meetings back, that the day may soon be approaching when the Native Plant Society and others will consider legal action to ensure the preservation of viable populations of Ferocactus viridescens in habitat.

Clearly, the situation warrants our concern. If things continue along their present course we may find the Coast Barrel and others reduced in numbers to the size of our present populations of Bergerocactus emoryi and Agave shawii. By putting our collective and individual support behind such efforts as the Natural History Museum's natural preserve in Florida Canyon, the proposed natural park in Penasquitos Canyon, and other current (or future) open space proposals we can not only help to maintain the quality of life here in San Diego but also help ensure the survival of our native succulents.

If we cannot preserve, and maintain a vigilant eye over, the diminishing populations of our own native cacti and succulents, I don't think we can legitimately expect the people of the developing nations and states of Africa, South America, etc. to give similar consideration to the plants of their regions.

Rare and Endangered Succulents of San Diego County<sup>1</sup>

Agave shawii \*\*\*  
Bergerocactus emoryi \*\*  
Bursera microphylla \*\*  
Dudleya attenuata ssp. orcuttii \*\*\*  
Dudleya blochmanae \*\*  
Dudleya blochmanae ssp. brevifolia \*\*\*  
Dudleya multicaulis \*\*\*  
Dudleya variegata \*\*\*  
Dudleya viscida \*\*\*  
Euphorbia misera \*  
Ferocactus viridescens \*\*\*  
Nolina interrata \*\*\*  
Opuntia basilaris var. brachyclada \*\*  
Opuntia parryi var. serpentina \*\*\*  
Opuntia wigginsii \*\*\*

- \*\*\* appears on list of "Very Rare and Rare and Endangered Plants".  
\*\* appears on list of "Rare and Not Endangered Plants (Including Some of Uncertain Status)".  
\* appears on list of "Plants Not Rare But Mostly of Limited Distribution".

<sup>1</sup> compiled from Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California, W. Robert Powell, editor, Special Publication No. 1, California Native Plant Society, Berkeley, c. 1974.

Memo. - 1.21.78.

The following gave to the Society:-

Ruth Stanton	- 25% of plant sales	\$1.95
Floyd Gable	- 25% of plant sales	\$12.80
Paul Schraer	- Donation	\$4.00
Dr. Reuben Vaughan	- Donation	\$4.00

RUSSELL EVANS.  
Treasurer.