

# ESPINAS Y FLORES



*Melocactus matazanus*

photo: Joe & Kay Quijada

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

Volume 38 Number 5 & 6  
Saturday May 10th 2003 1:00 PM  
&  
Saturday June 7th & 8th 2003 (details inside)  
Room 101 Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park



# Presidents Message

April 19, 2003

Our meeting on the 12th of April proved to be a lively and inspirational one. Though slow to gather, we had over 65 members and guests sign in and we were treated to some fine presentations. Tom DeMerritt, just back from Kazakhstan, charming new daughter, Katya in tow, treated us to his expertise on *Rebutia*. It is always fun to listen to Tom as he gets so excited about this genus - I think because he can collect so many and still have room for more! Chris Miller did a great job putting together that Matrix for identifying *Gasterias*. This is such a fun group of plants to grow around here - by the looks of the enthusiasm for the offsets she brought, many more of you will share in enjoying these terrific humming bird attractors. Thanks to Tom and Chris! Eric Gronborg presented the program which was a fascinating look at the Zen Gardens of Japan. His excellent slides beautifully illustrated the various elements of the Gardens as Eric explained the role of each element. I appreciated his drawing the comparison to the natural landscapes as we see in the desert. Thank you for a wonderful program Eric. The benefit drawing was quite lively - thanks to the efforts of Lee and the generous donations of Don Patterson, Jeanette Dutton, Joe Quijada, and Susan Hopkins - great saw!

This is the last Newsletter before our big Show and Sale - JUNE 7 & 8 - so look carefully for more information and volunteer opportunities - we really do need everyone possible

to help out and I encourage new members to come and participate.

LETS MAKE THIS THE BIGGEST SHOW EVER! Bring plants, bring plants, bring plants. If you have not shown before - bring plants. On Friday we will be there all afternoon and people will be there to show you how to label and locate your plants. In addition to the traditional trophies, winners this year will be awarded custom made pots, engraved with SDC&SS, 2003! So look through your collection and bring those deserving plants! This is lots of fun and we provide lunch for all volunteers. See you on the 10th of May. Pam Badger [pambadge@earthlink.net](mailto:pambadge@earthlink.net)

A few members have serious medical problems that prevent them from attending meetings. We would like to start a column in FYI to recognize these individuals and perhaps generate some mail or phone calls to these people to let them know we haven't forgotten them. To this end, if you know of anyone who is in the hospital or at home and not ambulatory, we would appreciate you notifying Herb Stern, who has volunteered to take on this function. He can be reached at the phone number on the back cover under Directors, or email at: [sternos@pacbell.net](mailto:sternos@pacbell.net).



## It's Show Time

**O**ur big show and sale is right around the corner and we all need to get ready. If you won a trophy and took it home, please have it engraved with your name and bring it to the May meeting. Start thinking about which plants of your collection are at their peak and get them ready. Entry cards will be available at the May meeting.

The show schedule is printed with this edition and there are some aspects to be aware of. The specialty division IV has trophy awards that have been donated over the years. If you wish to enter your plant in one of these categories, it will not be considered for another division trophy. For example, if you have a fantastic *Mammillaria* from Baja, you need to decide which trophy, best *Mammillaria* or best Mexican Plant you want your plant to be eligible to win because, it cannot be both. We do this to simplify the judging process, which takes hours. With more than 700 entries last year, I hope we can grow in size without being limited by the judging time.

On Friday, June 6, there will be members helping unload cars of those who would like the help. If you make a list of your entries it will help you keep track at the end of the show. Bring in those empty boxes for our sales area. If you are interested in selling plants, please contact Tom Birt our Sales Chair. You must obtain a bar code number before the deadline or you will not be able to sell at our event. As always, we need your help and participation to make this a huge success. See you there,

*Tom Knapik*

◆ **Elfin Forest Garden Festival**

Sat May 3, 2003, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
20223 Elfin Forest Rd. Escondido 92029  
[www.elfinforestgardens.info](http://www.elfinforestgardens.info).

- ◆ San Diego County Fair - at Del Mar will be June 13 - July 7.
- ◆ If you do not receive your newsletter - they are usually mailed 8-10 days before the meeting - or if you have questions regarding your membership - you can now e-mail direct to our Membership Chair - Collette Parr - through the membership link at our website - [SDC&SS.com](http://SDC&SS.com).



# MAMMILLARIA

by John Durham

It all started with a *Mammillaria*. Not that it was my first plant. I already had a jumbled collection of cactus and succulents that had fol-



lowed me from location to location over the years. I didn't know much about them. I called them barrel cactus, donkey tail and old man, yet they had survived in spite of my neglect. That changed with a visit to a local nursery that displayed a large selection of cactus and succulents. I had never seen so many different forms and shapes under one roof. Excitedly, I gathered up an armload of these little gems and headed home. One of the plants I bought that day was *Mammillaria duwei*. No larger than a silver dollar, its small green body was covered with an intricate pattern of white bristles that were highlighted by delicate hooked centrals. With great expectations I planted that little guy in an eight inch pot and poured on the water. I assumed that some day it would eventually fill that big pot, but by the second week it seemed to be shrinking. There I stood, like so many beginners....over-potted, over-watered and over-enthusiastic. Rather than be discour-

aged, I was now determined to learn what I could about these fascinating plants and how to grow them successfully. Of course, this meant the acquisition of more plants to help with my research and the construction of more back yard infra structure to hold them. Soon my new hobby became something bordering on obsessive-compulsive with my enthusiasm always outpacing my common sense by a few steps. Luckily, the hardy nature of *Mammillarias* allows for a few mistakes along the way and they seemed to flourish. Though still new to the botany and the language used, what I have learned about the plants, their specific needs and where they come from has made an already enjoyable pursuit that much more interesting.



With some 300 species and varieties, *Mammillaria* is the largest genus in the family *Cactaceae*. From the Latin *mammilla* or nipple-like, *Mammillaria* takes its name from the shape of its raised tubercles. Some are conical like *M. longimamma* or pyramidal and angular like *M. compressa*. Never aligned in ribs like other cactus, the tubercles are arranged in a

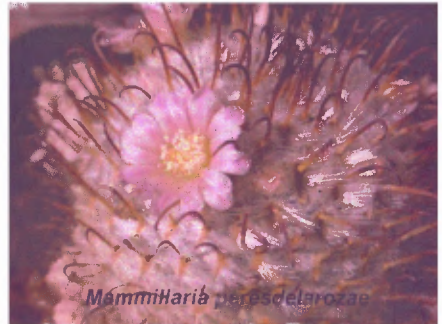
series of descending spirals that encircle the plant and give it that signature appearance. The areole at the end of the tubercle supports a fan of radial spines. Some like *M. sempervivi*, are short and few, while others grow numerous and long, fine hair-like spines that obscure the body of the plant as with *M. guelzowiana*. From the center of these radial clusters longer, stouter central spines can grow. These centrals can be straight, bent, hooked or absent and add to the personality of the individual species. *M. perezdelarosae* and *M. lephacantha* are dramatic examples of central spines. Tufts of white or yellow wool develop at the axils between the tubercles and add to the plants fuzzy appearance.

I first thought all *Mammillaria* were solitary and globular, but in fact many species cluster to form mounds of heads like *M. eichlamii* or branch out above the base with short cylindrical arms like *M. elongata*. Most are small and never exceed six inches in height. Although *M. matudae* will grow well over a foot in length, most species will fit in the palm of your hand and some, like *M. solisoides*, never exceed the size of a golf ball.

*Mammillaria* flowers originate from the axil or joint formed at the base of the tubercles. The flowers form a wreath of color around the crown of the plant. These white, yellow or red, day blooming flowers are small, but the display and number of flowers make up for their size. It is not uncommon for *Mammillarias* to bloom in their second year which adds to their popularity.

Here in San Diego County, we can find *M. tetrandra* and *M. dioica* growing as close as Anza-Borrego, as well as a fair selection of the genus in

the Southwestern states. However, the majority of *Mammillarias* are native to Mexico's Sonoran desert, its Baja Peninsula and the islands of the Gulf of California. Examples can be found south through Central America into Columbia and Venezuela and East into the Caribbean. This makes their habitat range from the desert floor, up the 6,000 foot pine forests and into the humid tropics.



Most of the popular species of *Mammillaria* are easy to grow, quick to flower and easy to come by. A well draining cactus soil mix and a south facing location will keep most Mamms happy. Pots should be selected according to the individual plants growth habits. I water from the bottom up starting in spring or weather permitting and add a diluted low nitrogen fertilizer mix to the bath once a month during the warmer months. There are a large number of plants and seed available and their compact size allows for a healthy sampling of the genus to thrive on a tabletop. For the serious grower, the scope of the genus alone offers the diversity of form, variety and the challenge of growing the more temperamental species.

And by the way, my little *Mammillaria duwei* is doing just fine.

## PROGRAM

# New & Interesting South African Discoveries

**Chris Barnhill** is Curator of Plant Collections at the Fullerton Arboretum. He has a broad interest in plants and we can expect something of interest to just about everyone. Steven Hammer's books; *Lithops, treasures of the Veld* and *New views on the genus Conophytum* are filled with Chris' photographs. The program will focus on new and interesting South African discoveries - ascepiads, bulbines, conophytums and other interesting geophytes. He is a great speaker with a keen eye and talent with the camera. What a great way to spend your Saturday Afternoon!

Don't miss this!

The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society  
Presents a



# Cactus Show And Sale

June 7

Show time 12:30 - 5:00 and Sales 9:00 - 5:00

June 8

Show and Sale time 10:00 - 4:00

Room 101 Casa Del Prado  
Balboa Park

For more information call (619) 462-1805 or (619) 589-1223  
or visit us at [SDCSS.COM](http://SDCSS.COM)

# April Brag Table Winners

Anyone is welcome to participate in this activity. If you have a Cactus or other Succulent that is looking particularly good - we encourage you to bring it in for the "Brag Table." There will be small entry cards to fill out with the name of the plant (to the best of your knowledge) and your name. The plants will be judged by a knowledgeable member and 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place is awarded to plants based on their health, staging, rarity, difficulty of growth, and the subjective opinion of the person judging. A small stipend is awarded which can be used toward the purchase of plants in our sales area.

Recorded by: Kay Quijada

## Succulents:

1st	<i>Pelargonium punctatum</i>	Andrew Wilson
2nd	<i>Pachyphytum amethystinum</i>	Jeff Harris
3rd	<i>Gasteria 'Frosty'</i>	Nibby Klinefelter

## Cactus:

1st	<i>Rebutia perplexa</i>	Collette Parr
2nd	<i>Eriosyce ihotzkyanae</i>	Tom DeMerritt
3rd	<i>Echinopsis wrightiana</i>	Andrew Wilson

Thank you for participating!



# SANSEVERIA

by Pam Badger

In doing research for this article, I came across numerous interesting bits of information, but was not coming up with inspiration which befits this magnificent group of plants. Easy to grow, stunning in their variety of leaf shape and coloration, their abundant flowers sweetly scented the night time air, these plants deserve a prominent place in any succulent lovers collection. The group has long been saddled with the not-so-inspirational common names of 'Mother-in-laws'-tongue' and 'Snake Plant,' I have often felt they deserved more gentle treatment. When I came across a beautiful article on the internet posted by the Hawaiian Sanseveria Society, I found the very inspiration I had been searching for.

The premise of the article is that *Sanseverias* have been widely grown in China for centuries - long before the currently popular 'Chinese Bamboo' - as the perfect 'Good Luck Plant.' The qualities of this genus reflect the 'Eight Virtues' of the eight gods, making it a treasured house plant to be kept near entrances so that those who pass the door will be blessed by the virtues. Whatever you may believe, I found this to be a charming lens with which to view this genus. I have chosen plants from my collection to illustrate each of the virtues.

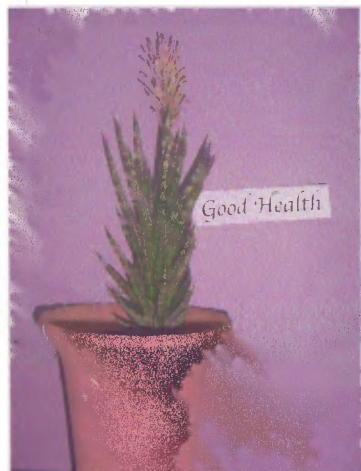
## THE EIGHT VIRTUES:

**Prosperity:** The plants' natural ability to produce many "pups" or keikis representing a wealth of family sometimes

referred to as wealth. *S. stuckii*.



**Good Health:** Plants are in good health at all times. Whether the plants are in good health or poor health, they look good without showing the ill effects of other house plants. The powers of good health can also be transferred to their owners and their guests/visitors. This is a new, unnamed species FKH 432. This one is in great health and bloomed beautifully this Spring, but would look just as good in most any condition.





**Long Life:** Plants live to be a very old age. Many outliving their owners and are passed down from generation to generation. I am not sure of the species of this plant, but can testify that it is very slow growing - it has not changed for years!

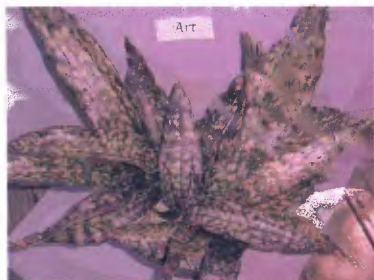


**Intelligence:** New shoot development may emerge from drain holes, the slightest crack in easement or container. Plants are also capable of reproducing itself from a leaf or stem piece. *S. mason-congo*.

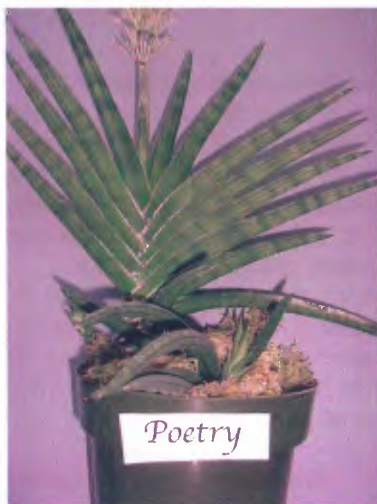


**Art:** The leaves are nature's canvas where no two leaves are exactly alike. Variegations will slightly vary on a plant, to a group of like plants and no

two leaves will match identically. The freckling of mottled foliage to the deep greens will not duplicate a pattern or combination of colors as each individual leaf. *S. kirkii v. pulchra* "copper."



**Poetry:** Not the same meaning as a poem or rhyme. Poetry refers to symmetry as in Yin and Yang, the fluid movement of Tai Chi Chuang, the exacting form of Yoga. Thus the arrangement and placement of leaves are set within the plant's natural state. Leaves are not produced and left to squander or be pushed aside. Every leaf has a function and form that relates to the main plant. *S. mutamo*.



**Beauty:** It is the flowers that beauty is referred to. Like so many other flowers. The Chinese favors flowers that are night fragrant (i.e. Pak Lan, Sweet Mei Lan, Ylang Ylang, Jasmine, etc.). The Sansevieria is also beautiful with its night fragrant flowers. Not sure of the name on this one (*S. hyacinthoides*?) but we brought this one in the house while in full bloom in February and it scented the night air for weeks.



ods of time. They do best in well drained soil, bright light, and, as with most succulent plants, allowed to dry between waterings. I have never seen a damaging insect on a *Sansevieria*. What more of a recommendation could be made of any plants?

Sources:

Website of the Hawaiian Sansevieria Society

The Sansevieria Book by Hermine Stover, 1983

**Strength:** New shoots have been known to burst through pots. Roots have been known to raise a plant well above its container and many plants have been known to split large heavy pots. *S. trifasciata laurentii*, the most commonly grown of all the *Sansevierias*, these are readily seen in restaurants, herbalists, acupuncturists, doctors accountants, banks, and shrines throughout China, and China-towns all over the world.

*Sansevierias* are remarkably easy to grow and are very forgiving should you neglect them for long peri-



# Upcoming Events

## 2003

**May 18** (Sunday) Epiphyllum Society of America's Show and Sale. Ayers Hall, Arboretum of LA County, Arcadia CA. Information: [www.epiphyllum.org](http://www.epiphyllum.org)

**June 1** Toronto C&S Club Show and Sale at Civic Garden Centre, Edwards Gardens, 777 Lawrence Ave. East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Sunday 10am - 4.30pm. Information from Dave Naylor 905-877-6013 or e-mail him at [naylor@unforgettable.com](mailto:naylor@unforgettable.com)

## **June 7th & 8th San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale**

**June 14-19** (Sunday through Thursday) CSSA 30th Biennial Convention, St Louis MO hosted by the Henry Shaw Cactus Society.

*In 2003, the Henry Shaw Cactus Society will host the 30th Biennial CSSA Convention in St. Louis. From the welcome reception on June 14 to the farewell party on June 19, prepare for a full schedule of education and fun. Enjoy hunting plants at the BIG cactus sale, too. (No sales on field trip days.) Sunday and Monday are "Succulent Days," with over a dozen presentations by noted speakers. Sunday's special banquet speaker is Missouri Botanical Garden Director Peter Raven, who will discuss endangered cacti of the United States. Tuesday features field trips to Missouri Botanical Garden, Forest Park attractions, Cass Bonsai Garden -- even a riverboat cruise. Wednesday and Thursday resume with "Cacti Days" and more informative programs by a group of international scholars and botanical experts.*

**July 5-6** CSSA Show & Sale, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA.

**August 30** Huntington Symposium, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino CA. Info: 626-405-2160 or 2277

**August 31** CSSA Board Meeting, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino CA.

## 2004

C&SS of New Zealand AGM and Convention, Palmerston North, New Zealand. Info from Frances Verrity at [verrity@actrix.gen.nz](mailto:verrity@actrix.gen.nz)

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

**November** (3-week tour tentatively planned for November 2004) CSSA Tour to Chile, home to *Copiapoa*, *Eriosyce*, *Eulychnia* and others. See more details on page 31. Watch for further announcements. Contact: Dan Mahr

## 2005

**Early August** CSSA 31st Biennial Convention, Phoenix AZ in air-conditioned comfortable hotel.

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