

# ESPINAS Y FLORES



## Program

Winter = Tylecodon, Summer = Gibbaeum, Fall = The Best Of Both Worlds  
in South Africa's Wilds. By, D Russell Wagner, Editor: CSSA Journal  
(Details Inside)

## Plants of the Month

Kelly Griffin will discuss Agaves and Friends.

&

Peter Walkowiak will talk about Gymnocalycium

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN DIEGO CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY INC.  
AFFILIATED WITH THE CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA

VOLUME 40 NUMBER 4 ~~41~~ # 44

SATURDAY APRIL 8TH 2006, 1:00 PM  
ROOM 101 CASA DEL PRADO, BALBOA PARK

# PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

March, 19th, 2006

**G**reetings!

By the time you read this, spring will have sprung, most of our cactus flowers will be hitting their peak performance for the year, and most of us will be revving up for another exciting year of growing and gardening.

Our March meeting was amazingly well attended considering the weather was against us with rain, wind, and hail. I'm not complaining, we need all the moisture we can get at this point, but my Agaves could certainly live without the tell-tale pock-marking from these hail events. I also find it sort of nerve-wracking when the temperatures have been so warm for so long and then we suddenly get trapped in this cooler than usual cycle. I know that cold to me isn't necessarily cold to my plants, but it definitely gets me hovering over some benches a little more frequently than usual, especially if those benches are covered in Adeniums or other heat-loving succulents.

Speaking of peak

performances, both of our speakers in March have raised the bar for April's talks. Don Hunt's observations on general C&S culture were inspiration enough for some interesting and spirited discussions regarding the basics of our hobby, and got right to the point of the issues; water, soil, pot, and plant. Rob Skillin's program on "Cactus and Conquistadors" really hit the nail on the head for those of us with an interest in Ariocarpus, Turbinicarpus, and related cryptic "living-stone" type of cacti. Both were just right for the day, and I know everyone appreciated them. Kudos to you both!

A special thanks to everyone who helped out with the nuts and bolts of the meeting: Chris Miller, Joe Kraatz, Jeff Harris, Pam Badger, George Plaisted as usual, going far and above the call of duty. Phil and Jan reliably manning the library and contemplating (I hope) another fantastic article for the E.Y.F. Michael Buckner for stepping forward to judge our well-stocked brag table (a daunting task), and Kay Quijada for recording the results. Rudy Lime and everyone who supplied and maintained our regalement areas,

Cover Photo: Mark Fryer

This is an extremely rare phenomena when, in addition to having crested growth, a cactus actually throws a crested flower. In this particular case, the subject is a mostly normal-looking *Gymnocalycium mesopotamicum*. This plant is one out of possibly hundreds of thousands of seedlings which are otherwise completely normal in their stem and floral morphology.

*President's Message Continued.....*

that hot coffee was especially nice during our little hail storm! Some of you have no doubt noticed that Terry Parr has taken over managing the Benefit Plant Drawing from Lee Badger, who is currently off in Costa Rica. Great job Terry, and huge thanks to Lee for his perseverance. I think it is so great that the San Diego C&S Society buys a \$45 annual membership to the national society (CSSA) every month via potentially a \$1 benefit drawing ticket!

Speaking of the CSSA, April looks quite promising with the CSSA Journal's Editor Russell Wagner giving us a program on one of his visits to South Africa. We'll also be hearing two short talks: Kelly Griffin will discuss Agaves and friends, and Peter Walkowiak will talk about *Gymnocalycium*. As always, we'll have plenty of plants for sale, trade, and give-away; not to mention the benefit plant drawing, library, regalement, supplies sales, and just wonderful camaraderie!

We have a number of volunteer positions that we can use some help with, so please contact me or any other board member if you've got a little extra time you can donate to helping us keep things rolling. I know Joe Kraatz can always use donations of boxes and -specifically- brown paper grocery bags with handles for our monthly sales, for instance. There will be oodles of volunteer opportunities available

during the June show and sale, so please, please, please contact Joe or Chris Miller to help out with the sales side, or Tom Knapik and Susan Hopkins to help out with the show side.

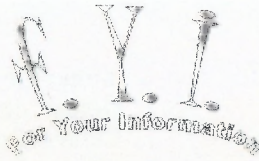
One last plea for help: This newsletter needs YOUR input! In this day and age of information, it seems ironic that the EYF would ever be lacking in material, but it seems nearly every month Paul needs additional information, articles, and photos. So I encourage all of you to just write up a quick paragraph or two about a favorite or interesting plant in your collection, with or without a photo, and send it to our editor- his contact info is all over this publication!

Look forward to seeing you all at the next meeting,

Mark Fryer



*Euphorbia tortirama*



## **A message from the American Society of Landscape Architects.....**

If you use mulch around your house be very careful about buying mulch this year. After the hurricane in New Orleans many trees were blown over. These trees were then turned into mulch and the state is trying to get rid of tons and tons of this mulch to any state or company who will come and haul it away. So it will be showing up in Home Depot and Lowes at dirt cheap prices with one huge problem; Formosan Termites will be the bonus in many of those bags. New Orleans is one of the few areas in the country where the Formosan Termites has gotten a strong hold and most of the trees blown down were already badly infested with those termites. Now we may have the worst case of transporting a problem to all parts of the country that we have ever had. These termites can eat a house in no time at all and we have no good control against them, so tell your friends that own homes to avoid cheap mulch and know where it came from.

For more information you can visit the LSU AgCenter Formosan Subterranean Termites Portal site below...

[http://www.agctr.lsu.edu/en/environment/insects/Termites/formosan\\_termites/](http://www.agctr.lsu.edu/en/environment/insects/Termites/formosan_termites/)

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### **MARCH BRAG TABLE WINNERS**

**Judged by: Michael Buckner**

Cactus

1st - *Eomatumcana oreodoxa*

Mark Fryer

2nd - *Mammillaria candida*

Peter Walkowiak

3rd - *Mammillaria bocasana*

Peter Walkowiak

Succulents

1st - *Pelargonium appendiculatum*

Rudy Lime

2nd - *Euphorbia fanshawii*

Peter Walkowiak

2nd - *Drasanthamum crassum*

Rudy Lime

3rd - *Euphorbia aeruginosa*

Peter Walkowiak

3rd - *Euphorbia barnama X*

*grandicornis*

Peter Walkowiak (Well done, Peter!)

**The due date for submission of articles (Plants of the Month) & Information on the Program/ Speaker will be the meeting preceding the intended issue (approximately one month ahead of time). The due date for letters, regular columns "brag table" winners and the Presidents Message will be one week later. All submissions are to be made to the Editor.**

# THE LIBRARY CORNER



**H**ello to all our fine feathered friends. This is Janis Kent and I'm Philip Kent, and we'd like to wish you all a bright and shiny San Diego morning. Honey, I learned something about our Mr. Bill Stearn. (Sound of coffee pouring). Yes, precious, what is that? Well, according to dear Mr. Paul Steward, (of desktop publishing fame and fortune?), yes, the one and the same, well according to Paul, Mr. Stearn was a very gracious and kind gentleman. He authored some 470 works, many of which are the standard reference in botany today. He served as the librarian of the Royal Horticultural Society. And, he was a scientist with the British Museum of Natural History. Well, he sounds like a perfectly delightful man! Indeed, and with the same kind of interests as you and I. Yes, he would have made a wonderful friend.

So, (sound of pages flipping) let's use our knowledge of botanical Latin and see what we can find about the clustery Golden Barrel cactus we repotted last weekend. Yes, let's look into it. More coffee, Dear? (Sound of coffee pouring). Thank you, Darling. Here is something that might help us with our study. What is that, Dear? A book called *The Cactus Family* written by Mr. Edward F. Anderson. (Sound of pages flipping). Well, according to the table of contents, Darling, this book contains an index of common names. Good! Let's start there. First, let's see if it says "Golden Barrel." No. Okay. Let's look under "barrel." Ahh, there's something. Look, a lot of varieties of barrel cactus. No listing for clustery, but here's one for "many-headed." Sounds good, let's see. . . So under the heading "Echinocactus," there is our "many-headed" one, *Echinocactus polycephalus*. Darling, that's strange. What's that, Dear? Well, the picture of the polycephalus doesn't look like the plant we have on the patio. No, no, it doesn't. It looks more like this one, the *Echinocactus grusonii*; but ours is clustery or many-headed, three heads to be exact, and not a solitary specimen like this picture. It's funny, Darling, the polycephalus kind of looks like a sea urchin. Well, Dear, let's plunge in and see if we can find an explanation about the many-headed grusonii. Yes, let's dig deeper.

First, let's take a look at its scientific name, the genus and species. *Echinocactus* is the genus and *grusonii* is the species. Now let's review. "Genus" refers to a kind or a group of (plants) identified by common

characteristics or by a single characteristic and “species” (which is both the singular and plural form of the word) is a division of a genus and is made up of (plants) having common attributes or aspects or features, that set them apart from other plants in the same genus or major group. Now that’s a mouthful! You know, Dear, it’s still a little puzzling or hard to understand. Yes Darling, it will take more practice to have a very clear understanding of this. Another way to think of species is as a description, sort of like a Latinized nickname. Or, you could say that “species” is the Latinized noun or adjective that follows the “genus” name in a taxonomic binomial (or particular identification). Ahh, now it’s becoming clearer. And if we looked at the words “subspecies” and “varieties,” well, they would be used to indicate the variations in the species that have developed in the wild or under cultivation. Sort of like the differences we see in “The Nutcracker” when performed by the New York, Dallas, or San Francisco Ballet Companies. Yes Dear, I believe that sums it up rather fairly.

So, the genus is *Echinocactus* and the species is *grusonii* and something causes it to develop in solitary specimens and sometimes many-headed or clustery specimens. Well Darling, it certainly is a fascinating subject. Yes, it certainly is and we’ve only just begun to learn how it all works. And I’m so anxious to learn more. Yes me too!!

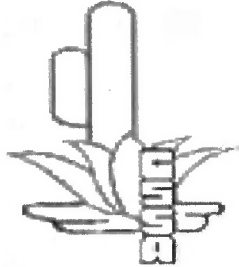
So maybe we can take in a performance of the San Diego Ballet this weekend. Or maybe there’s a cat show in town. Oh Darling, you know how I love cats. That would be fun. By the way, did you hear on the news that the Hooded and Bullock’s Orioles will be arriving here soon? Oh yes, and have you seen our precious little guests wintering across the street? You mean those magnificent white Pelicans? Yes Darling, the American White Pelicans. Look here (sound of pages flipping). They would be known as *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*. *Pelecanus* from Latin meaning pelican and *erythrorhynchos* derived from the Greek words “erythros” meaning red, and “rhynchos” meaning beak. It’s such a grand bird. White with black wing tips and a very large orange bill. Why its wing span is nearly nine feet across. And Darling, both parents incubate. My, how precious!

So, until nest time, your lovely Librarians, Janis & Phillip Kent



# CSSA Promotional Article

## No. 1 2006



In this article I'd like to focus on the **Cactus and Succulent Journal**. Under the able leadership of our current editor Russell Wagner, the journal has a new look, elegantly formatted and lavishly illustrated entirely in color. **Volume 77 (2005)** contains something of interest for every lover of succulent plants. Space limitation allows me to mention only a few of the highlights.

The **January-February issue** features an article on lesser-known and under-appreciated **succulent members** of the **Portulaca Family**, including the genus **Avonia**. Another article of interest concerns the **hybridization** of **Turbnicarpus** and **Gymnocactus**, which includes useful cultural information. As usual, the **March-April issue** contains the 2005 offering of the **International Succulent Introductions**. There were some real goodies here that I certainly wouldn't have wanted to miss out on.

This issue also features three articles of interest for lovers of melocacti with many photos of plants in habitat, especially the one covering **The Melocacti of Chapada Grande, Brazil**, but also those covering **The Succulents of Venezuela's Rio Chama Conayon** and **Trekking for Cuban Cacti**. In the **May-June issue** we find a lengthy article discussing field observations on **Backebergia** and other cacti of **The Balsas Basin** in western Mexico.

The **July-August issue** presents **Pachypodium mikea**, a new arborescent species from **Madagascar**. The features of this plant are carefully compared with its well-known close relatives **P. geayi** and **P. lamerei** and also with **P. ambongense** and the recently described **P. menabeum**. Also of interest in this issue is an article on the **Interdependence of the Galapagos Islands Cacti and Fauna**. Two travelogues in the **September-October issue** focus

on the cacti and succulents of the **Superstition Mountains** near Phoenix and **Gasterias** in habitat in **South Africa**. Articles on epiphytic cacti don't often appear in our journal, but there is one in the September-October issue on **Schlumbergera hybrids** with spectacular flower photos and good cultural information. Finally Part 3 of a three-part series entitled "**Succulents for most Gardens**," appears in this issue (Parts 1 and 2 appear in the previous two issues). Featured in these articles are the genera **Pheidimus**, **Hylotelephium** and **Rhodiola**, which I had never heard of, but they turn out to be splits from the genus **Sedum**. Most of the plants discussed are native to various parts of Eurasia and should be of interest to cool-climate gardeners (they should be good for zones 1-6, according to the articles). Not particularly heat tolerant, these plants will be of less interest to those of us living in warmer climates, but we have many other choices of cacti and succulents for growing outdoors. In the final issue of the year, one can learn about **Thelocactus** in habitat and in cultivation, succulent and xeromorphic **Bromeliads of Brazil** (**Dyckia marnier-lapostollei**, in particular) and also the changing face of **cactus fruit growing**. Also in this issue is a special conservation report exploring the threat posed by invasive weeds and wildfires to our **North American deserts**. Sequels to both this conservation report and

the article on Brazilian succulent bromeliads are promised for the coming year.

I hope this brief review of Volume 77 of our journal gives the reader some idea of the breadth of coverage now available. We are trying to include more articles of general interest to the succulent hobbyists than has sometimes been true in the past, and I think we are succeeding in accomplishing this. In addition to the various articles included in each issue, regular features include book reviews, a page of succulents on stamps by Peg Spaete, a buyers' guide and appearing in most issues, a research and conservation report by Donna Woodward.

I know that many affiliate club members are not members of **CSSA** and that although you may have access to the **Cactus and Succulent Journal** in your club's library, you may not have been able to become aware of all that the journal has to offer. By Joining **CSSA** and having regular access to your own copy of the journal, you will be able to increase your understanding and appreciation of the wonderful plants that form the basis of our hobby.

Good Growing,

Bob Barth, Publicity Chair, CSSA



# Winter = Tylecodon, Summer = Gibbaeum, Fall = The Best Of Both Worlds, In South Africa's Wilds

In April and May of 2003 Russell Wagner, editor of our favorite magazine, *Cactus and Succulent Journal*, traveled to South Africa for a five week

botanizing expedition with Steven Hammer of the Sphaeroid Institute. Steven was an ideal guide to the flora of Namaqualand, the winter rainfall desert of South Africa's west coast.

Namaqualand is home to many of the succulents we grow here in our own California-style Mediterranean climate, and Steven has visited this area over 20 times! As a result, Russell

saw many wonderful plants and was able to have them immediately identified by his trusty and stalwart guide. He saw many species of his favorite genus: *Tylecodon*, members of the *Crassula* family

that have pachyform trunks and thick, succulent, summer-deciduous leaves and which flower during the summer while totally leafless, and these plants will be featured in his talk. On a smaller scale, he saw and photographed Hammer's beloved *Conophytums* and countless other wonderful Mesembs. He found

that about 90% of the above-ground perennial life forms in this remarkable desert are Mesembs, a fact that somehow escaped his notice when reading books and articles on the subject for many years. Of course, a plethora of aloes, especially the wonderfully impressive tree aloe, *A.*



*dichotoma*, were seen in abundance, and a surprising variety of bulbs hid in every nook and cranny.

One memorable three day camping trip took him to the un-

botanized Mt Terror in a remote corner of the Richtersveld National Park. One night a leopard surprised an expedition member in the dark, but Russell stayed in his sleeping bag and missed seeing it. One the way up Mt Terror, a new species of *Odontophorus* was happened upon, and we saw two interesting, and perhaps unknown *Othonna* species, so small and scraggly they were hardly worth a picture.



Stunted *Aloe dichotoma* trees dotted the top of the mountain, framing panoramic views that included the Orange River, which forms the border between South Africa and Namibia. Mt



Terror was a strenuous, and yes scary, trek, but complete solitude with succulents was found!

After four weeks of camping in the winter rainfall desert, with occasional stops at a friend's house for showers and meals, Russell and Steven headed over to the Little Karroo, a mostly (but not entirely!) summer rainfall region, to spend a week seeing *Haworthias*, *Gibbaeums*, *Euphorbias* and many other spectacular plants,

plump from heavy summer rains. One day was spent looking only for the ten or twelve beautiful species of *Gibbaeum* that are spread out along an 80 km stretch of land in this succulent paradise. We will see most *Gibbaeum* species, including the weird and wild

*Muiria hortense* in Russell's talk. Traveling in the desert is the best way to learn about these plants, but a good travelogue is the next best thing. Russell will take you on a journey through both winter and summer rainfall sections of South Africa in this month's program filled with big bright beautiful

pictures and lots of interesting details about plants in habitat. Presented in digital format, the talk will be about 45 minutes long, with plenty of time for questions.

D Russell Wagner  
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# UPCOMING EVENTS

2006

**April 8 & 9th**: South Coast CSS Show & Sale, at So. Coast BG, 26300 Crenshaw, PV; 310-832-2262

**April 22 & 23rd**: South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale; same addr; info call: 310-831-1209

**May 6 & 7th**: Sunset CSS Show & Sale, Veterans Mem. Ctr, 4117 Overland, Culver City 310-822-1783

**May 21st**: Huntington Plant Sale, 10-5pm, Huntington BG, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino; 626-405-2160

**May 21st**: Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale; Los Angeles County Arboretum; 310-831-1209

**June 3 & 4th**: San Diego CSS Summer Show & Sale; Room 101, Casa Del Prado, SD; 619-477-4779

**June 10th**: Gates CSS 29th Show & Sale; Sale: Sat, Sun 9-4; Show opens 1pm Sat. after judging; Jurupa Mountain Cultural Center; 7621 Granite Hill; Glen Avon: CA 909-360-8802

**June 30**: July 2nd: CSSA Annual Show & Sale – Huntington Gardens, Plant sale June 30, July 1st, 2nd; Show July 1st, 2nd; Huntington BG, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino; 626-405-2160 or 2277

**June or July?** LACSS Show & Sale at Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd, Encino, CA info: 818-363-3432; Set in lovely community garden, just off 101 freeway a couple exits west of 405. Will probably be combined with bromeliad society show.

**Aug 19 & 20th**: 21st Annual Intercity Show & Sale at the LA County Arboretum; Largest Cactus & Succulent show in world; Long Beach, LA CSS and SG CSS clubs work together on this show. Info 818-998-9306

**Sept 2nd**: Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium, all day at HBG; These have been going on for years; There is a fee for this, they include tours of special areas, meal and plant auction. Renowned speakers from all over the world give talks.

**Sept 24th**: Long Beach CSS club annual auction at Dominguez Adobe, 18127 So. Alameda St, Compton, CA (Dominguez Hills)

**Oct 14 & 15th**: San Gabriel CSS Annual Show & Sale, at LA County Arboretum, exit Baldwin off 210, Arcadia, CA. And be sure to leave time to tour the grounds, it will have cooled down this time of year.

# Espinas Y Flores

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## Standing Committees & Sub Committees

Conservation: Kelly Griffin  
Education & Exhibits  
Brag Table: Kay Quijada  
Plants of the Month:  
Mark Fryer  
Summer Show: TBA  
Winter Show: TBA  
History: Terry Parr  
Liaison  
Balboa Park Desert Garden: Susan Hopkins  
CSSA Affiliate Rep: Kelly Griffin  
Quail Botanical Gardens: Phyllis Flechsig

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Elizabeth Glover  
San Diego Wild Animal Park Baja California  
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Library: Phil Bunch, Phil & Jan Kent,  
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Seeds: Kelly Griffin  
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Annual Sales: Joe Kratz and Terry Parr  
Auction & Holiday Plants:  
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Benefit Table: Lee Badger  
Monthly Plant Sale:  
Jeff Harris & Joe Kratz  
Monthly Supply Sales:  
George & Jerry Plaisted  
Publicity: Tom DeMerritt & Stan Yalof  
Programs: Kelly Griffin  
Reception: Ethel Standish  
Regalement  
Monthly: Allen Clark, Rudy Lime &  
Suzie White  
Picnic: Laura & Tom DeMerritt