

**Volume 42 Number 10**

**November 2007**

# *ESPINAS Y FLORES*

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



**Program: Steve Hammer  
“Mable, Mesembs and the  
Mystery of Succulent Plants”**

**Plant of the Month: Ric Newcomer,  
“Strange, Weird and One of a Kind**

**Saturday November 10, 2007, 1:00pm  
Room 101 Casa Del Prado**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Greetings!

When we first found out our October meeting had been cancelled there was little more than pandemonium and upset. Yes, it's a sad first for the SDCSS for us to get booted from our traditional meeting space without enough notice to come up with an alternative. Yes, we probably could have found an alternate site if we had a little more than 48 hours notice. As it was, everyone came together on the phone and pitched in calling and notifying everyone we could think of; huge kudos go out to George Plaisted, Joe Kraatz, Kay Quijada, and everyone else who took the time to pick up the phone or pay a visit to someone they knew would have been happy to make it to the meeting in spite of the rain. We are fortunate in now having been "struck by lightning" in this one place, that it may never strike there again. Nonetheless, if you feel the need to discuss further, or want to make a suggestion of an alternate meeting venue, grab me (or any other board member) and let us know your thoughts. Fortunately our speaker for the day (Tim Harvey) and Ric and Marilyn Newcomer will all be back with their talks later in the year.

November's meeting is sizing up as an absolute don't miss:

Steve Hammer will offer up an hour or so of his time to discuss "The real Story of Queen Mable". For those of you who don't remember, Mable was someone who used to pop up in all sorts of interesting places. Many of us got our first tastes of Mesembs by dining on "Mable's Succulent Salad Greens", when ordering plants and seeds from Mesa Gardens nursery. For \$10 (or something like that), the mysterious and marvelous Mable would assemble a box of "salad greens", shrubby mesembs with a couple nice Lithops and or Conophytum plants. Usually you would wind up paying about \$1.50 per plant and they would all be named and interesting! Then there was a series of articles in one of the journals called "Ask Mable" which would run the gamut of questionnaires for succulentophiles, readers could write to Mable in a sort of Dear Abby format and Mable would cook up an answer for you on the spot, it was like watching Grandma cook a fantastic meal on the woodstove during a snowstorm. Warm and cozy. So with Steve, you can expect full disclosure about Mable, mesembs, and the mysteries of succulent plants in cultivation and the wild.

*On the cover: A smoky October sunset from the SDCSS President's backyard.*

A healthy Ric Newcomer will finally be offering his delayed Plant of the Month talk on new and unusual cultivars he's been collecting over the past years.



*Ariocarpus trigonis* in flower.

It's hard to believe that we're almost finished with "regular" meetings for the year. December, as you'll remember, is our annual Holiday Social and then we're done for 2007! It's never too soon to start planning for 2008, so

perhaps some of you out there might make a resolution to involve yourself on a more integral level!?!

Well San Diego has experienced another fire disaster, this time possibly encompassing even more acreage than the Cedar fire of 2003. Fortunately there were fewer casualties, but the losses to property have been even greater. It is still too soon to know what the bottom line expense of this disaster will be in terms of economic impact and environmental setback. One scientist interviewed this morning on the radio said the amount of carbon expelled into the atmosphere would be roughly equal to 20 million vehicles running up and down the southern California freeways constantly for one year. Satellite photos show fire plumes from Los Angeles to a point about 200 miles south of Tijuana in Baja Mexico. Almost 400,000 people in San Diego county have been moved because of it, and expectations are that insurance claims will top one billion dollars. My heart goes out to everyone affected and I sincerely hope everyone negatively affected will recover soon. The days will cool down and we all hope the rains will be gentle.

Sincerely,

Mark Fryer,

Saturday October 20th, 2007

Note: The Newcomers asked the Editors to kindly rerun their POM article from the August issue.

# STRANGE, WEIRD & ONE OF A KIND

By Ric & Marilyn Newcomer

This is a program I have been looking forward to presenting. Over the years we have seen the larger genus groups discussed in our 'Plant of the Month' program. However, there are many (over 100) smaller genera comprised of one to five plants. These seem to get overlooked. In most cases, these are some of the most beautiful, strange and weird plants. This program will include both cactus and succulents.

I will be bringing in many of these so that you will be able to judge for yourself. I feel that this program will benefit the newer members as they most likely have not seen these plants at shows and sales, and yes, even we 'older' members can enjoy plants we may not have in our collections.

Some of the plants that I will bring in are over 50 years old, or at least I have had them that long. Many come from the old timers that are gone now and I'm sure some of them were collected back in the 50's and 70's. Some of them are too large to bring in, but I will list them here as worth while collecting. You will see many others in our October 'Meet the Member' program when Marilyn and I will interview each other and show you pictures of our collections and greenhouses.

*Acanthocalycium* - Brazil  
*Acanthocercus* - Mexico to Central Am.  
*Acharagma* - Mexico  
(*Coryphantha*, *Escobaria*?)  
*Arrojadoa* - Brazi  
*Austrocactus* - Chile  
*Aztekium* - Mexico  
*Blossfeldia* - Argentina  
*Browningia* - Bolivia, Peru, Chile  
*Cintia Knizei* - Bolivia  
*Cohemia* - Mexico  
*Denmoza* - Argentina  
*Echinomastus* - USA , Mexico  
*Epithelantha* - USA

*Geohintonia* - Mexico  
*Lasiocercus* - Peru  
*Leuchtenbergia* - Mexico  
*Lophophora* - USA , Mexico  
*Mila* - Peru  
*Neolloydia* - USA , Mexico  
*Neowerdermannia* - Peru, Chile  
*Oroya* - Peru  
*Ortegocactus* - Mexico  
*Polceyphora* - Mexico  
*Polaskia* - Mexico  
*Pygmaeocereus* - Peru  
*Strombocactus* - Mexico

Although this list is by no means complete, it gives you an idea of the smaller and overlooked genera. After going through our collections, this is what I came up with.

Now to address the succulents ~ there are so many wonderful succulents, I really just got into these in the last few years. Marilyn has been collecting many of these for some time now, so I will borrow a few of hers to bring in too, 'with her permission, of course'!

*Abromeitiella* - Argentina, Bolivia  
*Aloinopsis* - South Africa  
*Astroloba* - South Africa  
*Bombax* - Mexico  
*Bowiea* - South Africa  
*Calibanus* - Mexico  
*Carruanthus* - South Africa  
*Diosorea* - South Africa  
*Didierea* - Madagascar  
*Dolichos* - Namibia  
*Frithia* - South Africa

*Greenovia* - Canary Island  
*Haemanthus* - South Africa  
*Mitrophyllum* - South Africa  
*Kedrostis* - Africa  
*Nycteranthus* - South Africa  
*Operculicarya* - Madagascar  
*Pseudolithos* - Somalia  
*Trichocaulon* - Namibia  
*Trichodiadema* - Africa  
*Welwitschia* - Angola  
*Xerosicyos* - Madagascar  
*Zygosicyos* - Madagascar

Here again this list is not complete but will give you an idea of the overlooked succulents that can add beauty to your collection. I will admit that many will be difficult to locate but the search is well worth while.

Marilyn and I are still looking for Plant of the Month volunteers for cactus or succulent in 2008. Several have stepped forward but we still have some openings. I will read off a few suggestions at the August meeting. Please take a turn ~ it's a great way to learn more about your plants from the research you will do and from your fellow members participation.

I look forward to seeing all of you, and please ask questions. I will answer them if possible and if I can't, I'm sure another member will.



*Calibanus hookeri*

More weird and wonderful next page! →



*Echinocactus grusonii* crest

*Pseudolithos miqirtinus*



*Ipomoea holubil*

# PICTURES FROM THE WILD ANIMAL PARK'S GARDEN FESTIVAL

Once again, Chris Miller did an outstanding job organizing this year's sale at the WAP's Garden Festival held October 6th & 7th. Those of us who volunteer for such events really enjoy the opportunity to talk to the public concerning the care of cactus and succulents and to publicize our society. Juergen Menzel provided the photos:



## FYI (FOR YOUR INFORMATION)

**PARKING:** Just a reminder that the Dead Sea Scroll Exhibit is still at the Natural History Museum. Also, at this time of year there are many events at Balboa Park that compound the parking shortage. Those of us arriving at 8:00am are getting excellent parking spaces. This gives us time to volunteer with setting up for our meetings and catching up with our friends from the society. Also, please carpool if possible.

**SNACKS:** Those with last names A-M are still on the hook to bring snacks to share at the break since we did not meet last month.

# What is a green meeting?

By Art Cooley

The San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society will host the national convention in San Diego in 2011. Increasing concern about our effect on the planet, has spurred discussion about being “green.” When I was in college in the 1950’s, conservation was defined as “the wise use of resources.” When the deposit laws were being enacted in the 70’s and 80’s “reduce, reuse, and recycle” were the buzz words. Today, “sustainable,” “green” and “carbon footprint” are common. But what do those words mean, and, as we plan for the National Convention in 2011, how do we create a green meeting? We might start by considering two major concerns: 1. carbon dioxide emissions and 2. water use.

## **Carbon dioxide pollution**

Increasingly, scientific evidence has demonstrated the adverse effects of rising levels of carbon dioxide. Some organizations have tried to reduce their carbon releases which are often referred to as one’s “carbon footprint.” The October 5th issue of *Science* reported that the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) concluded that “95% of the society’s entire emissions come from jet fuel used in getting members to the annual meeting.” All other emissions pale in comparison. And, it is likely that our convention would create a similar proportion of emissions from air travel.

The SCB last year began offering “carbon offsets” to attendees for \$20 to compensate for the emissions created by their travel. “Carbon offsets” represent money that is donated to an organization that is reducing greenhouse gases, by recovering methane at landfills, planting trees, using wind-turbines or generating green energy. In 2006 there were few volunteer participants, however, in the SCB’s meeting this year in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, “97% of the attendees at the meeting...checked the offset box...” thereby, erasing their travel ‘footprint’ for that conference. Imagine 97%! Since emissions from flying dominate all the other emissions, we should offer similar options.

Therefore, we could suggest that our attendees, at the time they make their reservations, choose from a list of acceptable organizations that reduce emissions. (Environmental Defense lists reliable options on their website.) Attendees would be offered an option to donate a sufficient amount to “erase one’s footprint.” by simply checking a box. Bev and I gave each other carbon offsets for Christmas, 2006, as a way to compensate for our carbon footprint. (Now you try bagging methane to put under the Christmas tree.)

**Water use**

In the October 21 issue of the “New York Times Magazine,” an article called “The Perfect Drought” underscored what we all know; we live in a desert and water supplies will be more and more difficult to obtain in the future. As a society that touts the advantages of cacti and succulents, we well understand that our plants are minimal water users. We should emphasize that fact by finding speakers, authors and scientists who can help our neighbors and residents understand how much water can be saved by xeroscape. We don’t have to wait for the convention to initiate this effort, but we should plan to have such participants at the convention. Indeed, in 2011 an “Open Forum” to develop community presentations and to share ideas about their community’s successes may be a valuable session to consider.

**Let us begin**

Undoubtedly, the collective, creative abilities of our members will be able to add to this list of greening activities, so let the discussions begin!

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# EVOLUTION OF CACTUS AND SUCCULENT CLASSIFICATIONS

By Steve Harris

Through the years since botanical classifications were first attempted in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the classification of cactus and succulents have undergone various reclassifications, revised descriptions, name changes and other derivations to confuse all of us who don't have a PhD in botany but simply love our odd little plants.

Many of these changes came about through the works and publications of the early naturalists and botanists who studied the plant families and attempted to bring order, with varying results. Some were readily adopted by the botanical community at large, some were completely ignored, and most are the subject of continuing debate.

I've attempted to put some of these major works and publications in chronological order, so that the reader can see how one author relates in time to another. Hopefully, this will help when you are trying to decipher some of the more esoteric data displayed in a formal botanical description. Many of these authors have species named for them. Of course, this is not an all-inclusive list, so if your favorite author is not listed, please feel free to send the editors a brief biographical article and we'll publish it!

## **The Eighteenth Century**

Carl von Linne (Carolus Linnaeus) (1707-1778), Swedish naturalist who first codified the genus and species descriptions still used today. Wrote *Systema Naturae*, 1735, *Genera Plantarum*, 1737, *Classes Plantarum*, 1738, *Philosophia Botanica*, 1751, and *Species Plantarum*, 1753. Linnaeus included many descriptions of succulents, and even cacti had been introduced to North Africa and Southern Europe by that time.

## **The Nineteenth Century**

Jacob Bigelow (1787-1879), an American physician and botanist. His major work, with George Engelmann, is *Description of Cactaceae*, 1856.

Augustin Pyrame de Candolle (1778-1841), a Swiss professor of botany. He published *Plantarum Succulentarum Historia*, 1798, and *Revue des Cactees*, 1829.

George Engelmann (1809-1884), German-American botanist who produced five works on Cactaceae, including *Description of Cactaceae* with Bigelow in 1856.

Adrian Hardy Haworth (1772-1833), important enough in the succulent world to have an entire genus (*Haworthia*) named for him. Published *Synopsis Plantarum Succulentarum*, 1812, and *Supplementum et Revisiones Plantarum*, 1819. His works were compiled and published in 1965 as *The Complete Works on Succulent Plants 1794-1831*.

Joseph M. F. Furst zu Salm-Reifferscheidt-Dyck (1773-1861). German botanist and succulent collector. It's a good thing they just used the last part of his name when the genus *Dyckia* was named after him. He described many species of succulents in several monographs, including *Cactaeae en Horto Dickensi Cultae*, 1841, 1845, 1850

### **Early Twentieth Century (1900-1930)**

Alwin Berger (1871-1931), a German succulent specialist and curator of the Hanbury Gardens. Wrote *A Systematic Revision of the Genus Cereus*, 1905, and *Kakteen*, 1929.

Nathaniel Lord Britton (1859-1934), Director of the New York Botanical Garden. His major work, with Joseph N. Rose, is the 4 volume masterpiece still used today as the basic reference, *The Cactaceae*, 1919-1923.

Charles Russell Orcutt (1864-1929), American botanist and expert in California and Mexican species of cacti. Wrote *American Plants*, 1901-1912, and *Cactography*, 1926.

Joseph N. Rose (1862-1928), Assistant curator of the National Herbarium at the Smithsonian Institution. His major work, with Britton, is the 4 volume masterpiece still used today as the basic reference, *The Cactaceae*, 1919-1923.

Carlos Spegazzini (1858-1926), an Italian-Argentinian botanist who wrote *Flora de la Provincia de Buenos Aires*, 1905.

### **Mid Twentieth Century (1930-1960)**

Curt Backeberg (1894-1964), a German cactus specialist who traveled widely in Central and South America. His major work, with Frederick M. Kunth, is *Kaktus-ABC*, 1935.

William Taylor Marshall (1886-1957), American botanist who, with T. M. Bock, wrote *The Cactaceae*, 1941. Also published *Arizona's Cactuses*, 1950.

Friedrich Ritter (1898-1983), German traveler and cactus specialist. Between 1927 and 1959 he described several new genera found in Central and South America.

### **Late Twentieth Century (1960-2000)**

Edward F. Anderson (b. 1932), Senior Research Botanist at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. He wrote *The Cactus Family*, 2001, hailed as the first complete treatment of the family since Britton and Rose.

Lyman D. Benson (1909-2002), an American botanist, cactus specialist and director of the Pomona Collage Herbarium. Wrote three books, *The Cacti of Arizona*, 1959, *The Native Cacti of California*, 1969, and *Cacti of the United States and Canada*, 1982.

# WHAT'S THE STATUS

By Juergen Menzel

Here are some pictures taken Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup> in the Baja Garden at the Wild Animal Park of the damage from the Witch Creek fire.

That was the closest the fire came to any of the sites in WAP we are caring for. The greenhouse didn't suffer any damage nor did the Gardens (except very little wind break here and there). When I arrived this morning there was no water pressure at all, but when I left it was almost back to normal.

The Native Plant Garden has no damage either. But the Palm Garden uphill from the Baja Garden shows signs of fire.

The funny thing is that the greenhouse obviously started its sprinkler system automatically (for irrigation) 5 or 6 days ago. And as typical for an automatic fire sprinkler it never stopped since. So the floor in the greenhouse was nothing but mud and all around the perimeter water was seeping and running to the neighbors (3rd picture). I didn't check what had happened to the water timer it was too muddy. I just turned of the faucet for now.

The gate to the rear part of the park is open so there were quite a lot mule deer in our area, but they are already back to normal (4th picture).





# CACTUS RECIPE OF THE MONTH: Cactus cookies

Joe Kraatz submitted this appropriate cookie recipe that he found on an old calendar he was just about to throw away. And just in time for the holidays!

1 cup unsalted butter, softened  
1 cup sugar  
1 tbsp orange zest  
1 large egg, room temperature  
1 tsp orange extract  
3 cups all purpose flour  
2 tps baking powder  
Icing for decorating  
Small candies for decorating



In a large bowl, cream together the butter, sugar and orange zest until light and fluffy.

Combine the flour and baking powder in a small bowl, toss lightly with fork. Gradually add 1/2 cup flour at a time to the butter mixture, stirring until completely incorporated to form a stiff dough.

Divide the dough into 3 balls. Wrap 2 of them in plastic and set aside.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Working with one ball of dough at a time, roll out the dough to 1/4 inch thickness between 2 sheets of wax paper. Remove top sheet of wax paper. Cut out cookies with a 4-inch cactus cookie cutter. Leaving stamped dough on wax paper, transfer it to a cookie sheet and refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes, or until firm. Carefully remove chilled cutout with a thin spatula and transfer to an increased cookie sheet.

Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until firm to the touch but not browned. Allow cookies to cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire rack. Decorate cooled cookies with icing and candies.

Author unknown.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

2007

**Nov 10:** California-Friendly® Gardening Festival, 9am-3pm, The Water Conservation Garden, 12122 Cuyamaca College Drive West, El Cajon. Info: [www.thegarden.org](http://www.thegarden.org) or 619-660-0614. ***Please note new date.***

**Nov 10-11:** San Gabriel Valley CSS Show and Sale, L.A. County Arboretum, 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia.

**Nov 11:** Borrego History Preservation Day, 9:00am-3:00pm, various locations in Borrego Springs, speakers and site visits, info: <http://www.abdnha.org> or call the Borrego Desert Nature Center at (760)767-3098.

**Dec 1-2:** Orange County CSS Show and Sale, 10:00am-4:00pm, 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton, info: 714-870-4887.

**Dec 15:** SDCSS Holiday Party, 11:00am-4:00pm.

## 2008 (Tentative)

**Feb 9:** SDCSS Winter Show & Sale, 9:00am-4:00pm, Rm 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

**Apr 12-13:** South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes, info: 310-832-2262.

**Apr 19-20:** Green Scene Plant Sale, Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Rd, Fullerton, CA 92831.

**Apr 27:** South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, info: 310-833-6823.

**May 3-4:** Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show & Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Rm, 4117 Overland Ave, Culver City, info: 310-822-1783.

**May 18:** Huntington Plant Sale, 10:00am-5:00pm, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino, info: 626-405-2160.

**Jun 7-8:** SDCSS Summer Show & Sale.

The due date for submission of article (Plants of the Month) and 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 President's Message will be one week later. All submissions are to be made to the Editors.

# San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society

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## Standing Committees & Sub Committees

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Conservation: Joe Kraatz & Herb Stern  
Brag Table: Candy Garner  
Plants of the Month: Ric & Marilyn Newcomer  
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Exchange Plants & Seeds: Michelle Heckathorn & Sara Schell

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SD Floral Association: Elizabeth Glover  
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