

SOUTH COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

MARCH 1986 NEWSLETTER

South Coast Botanic Garden
26300 Crenshaw Boulevard
Palos Verdes Peninsula

MARCH MEETING

Sunday, March 9th, 1986 at 1:30 P.M. at the
South Coast Botanic Garden, Palos Verdes.

PROGRAM: Woody and Tambra Minnich of Cactus Data Plants will show us the Cacti of the Sonoran and Baja Islands, where you may encounter storms and assorted wildlife as well as succulents. Come take the tour!

REFRESHMENTS will be provided by Margaret Brennan, Beatrice Gonzalez, Dorothy Herrera, and MaryBelle Wallenhorst, who'll be joining chairman Verna McCarty (645-5009). THANK YOU.

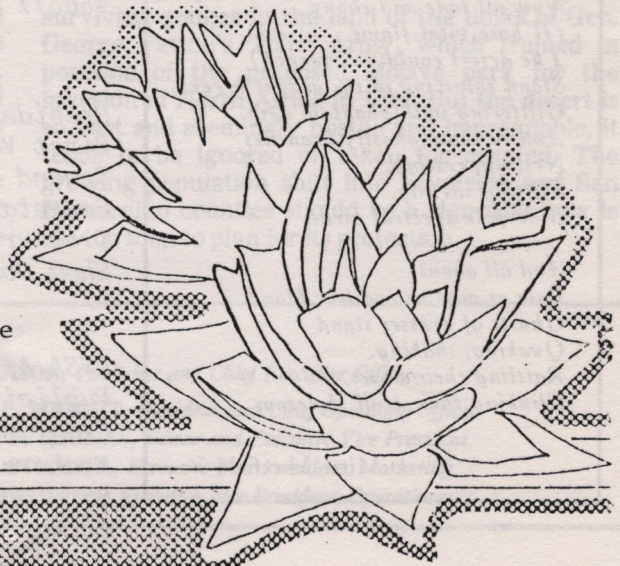
BRAGGING TABLE: Our plants are looking good so bring them for Bob Causey to brag on.

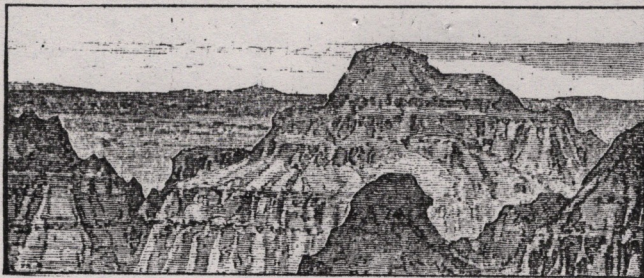
PLANT SALES: We expect Woody and Tambra will be bringing lots of fine plants for sale. Plan on temptation.

CONTEST: Whip out your sketch pads and create an original drawing for our '86 Show/Sale flyer (must fit on 8½ by 11" paper). Members will judge the entries and the winner will receive a handsome plant.

SHOW SCHEDULE: The '86 schedule is included with this N.L. Please see inside back cover for more info.

CACTUS GARDEN: Ed Hancock reports that he expects to announce another work session on the garden. Meanwhile, bed #8 (cereus & barrels) needs attention. If you can volunteer to join that mound, please see Ed. He needs volunteers & will "take all kinds"!





Haunted Mohave

Horizoned with phantom hills
Wraiths of mauve and blue.
Paved with gold,
Lucent and mendacious gold.

Far off, mirage of spectral sea
Whose lapid tides
Shine in spectral splendor.
Nearer, the tattered shroud
Of a long dead volcano,
Clawed to shreds by desert winds.

Here, monstrous pearl-stemmed
Ghosts of plants
That once (in their diluvian age)
In some vast jungle were vehement
With hot, red bloom.

There, shrunken mountain giants
Now all jade and ebony
(Whose vital flame
The desert could not quench)
Stand shivering in the ardent breeze,
Glittering with phantom dew.
And in those ghostly branches
Nesting, resting,
Flitting silently,
Bide pale spectral birds.

And all about
Pale as mist or red like blood
Ghosts of grasses stand
Quaking, shaking,
Rattling their bones,
Clinking their frail skeletons.

Mina Maxfield

PLEASE WELCOME NEW MEMBER:
Seymour Linden

Gen. Cacti & Succulents (&CSSA!)
PLEASE ALSO ADD THE FOLLOWING RENEWALS TO
YOUR ROSTER: Barbara Allen,

and Dick & Lupe Hulett,

and John Stewart,

* * * * *

CREDITS

Poem is from the March, 1938 DESERT PLANT LIFE.

Front and back cover graphics are by the
talented Karen Holley and were taken from
earlier issues of our N.L.

Aloe polyphylla is by James D. McMannis III
of Ohio U. for the 1982 HIGHLAND SUCCULENTS
CATALOG (Eureka Star Rte., Gallipolis, O.
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1986 OFFICERS

President.....Eleanor Barker,
First V.P.....Sean Fleming,
Second V.P.....Jim Hanna,
Secretary.....Dorothy McArthur,
Treasurer.....Virginia Russell,
Show Comm.....Norma Holley, Bob Causey, &
Carol Kennedy

* * * * *

CSSA Affiliate Rep....Eleanor Barker
Publicity.....Sean Fleming
Programs.....Jim Hanna
Membership.....Norma Holley,
Newsletter Editor.....Carol Wujcik,

Go Gentle Into the Desert

Say "wilderness" and certain images come to mind: mountains, forests, waterfalls, lakes, streams, deer, pack mules. The impressions are green and cool and pleasant. Say "desert" and the vision is sand, wind, endless barren waste, emptiness. It is hot, brown and oppressive. But there is such a thing as desert wilderness. There are spectacular granite peaks in the California desert, waterfalls and vast carpets of wildflowers. The desert is home to multitudes of plants and animals including the tortoise and bighorn sheep, the Joshua tree and the creosote bush.

Everyone knows the desert for its searing, inescapable heat, but there also are freezing temperatures and snowfall. On the whole, the desert climate generally is mild. Silence and spaciousness are essential ingredients of the wilderness experience. Both abound in the desert.

Southern California contains 25 million acres of desert within a day's drive of the coastal metropolitan complex and its 13 million residents. Rarely visited by most, the California Desert is destined to become a major recreational playground.

Californians and the Congress have an opportunity to plan for that day and to provide key portions of the desert, a distinctly fragile environment, with the protection it should have so it can properly be appreciated and enjoyed by future generations. That goal would be achieved by the California Desert Protection Act sponsored by Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.). The bill would expand Death Valley and Joshua Tree national monuments and elevate them to national park status. A new 1.5-million-acre Mojave National Park would be created in the undeveloped region east of Barstow between Interstate Routes 10 and 40, the roads to

Las Vegas and Needles. About half of the Mojave and Joshua Tree parks would be set aside as wilderness areas, as would much of the expanded 3.4-million-acre Death Valley park (by contrast, Yellowstone Park covers 2.2 million acres). There would be about 4.5 million acres of wilderness outside the parks. The protected areas would incorporate a number of important archeological, geologic and paleontological sites.

Supporters of the Cranston bill, including environmental groups involved in the California Desert Protection League, say the measure would not impinge on existing mining and grazing rights, most known significant mineral deposits or the most popular off-road vehicle areas. Virtually all the land now is owned by the federal government and controlled by the Bureau of Land Management. Any private lands would be incorporated only through land exchanges, not purchase. "We want this to be a no-cost bill," a Cranston aide said.

The concept has merit and deserves support. The extensive amount of wilderness proposed will be controversial, but opponents will have ample opportunity to testify at hearings in the months to come. No roads, motorized travel or permanent structures are permitted in wilderness areas.

The fragility of the desert is demonstrated by the surviving gouges in the land of the tanks of Gen. George Patton's Third Army, which trained in portions of the proposed Mojave park for the invasion of North Africa in 1942. But the desert is so vast and seemingly hostile and impregnable, it tends to be ignored or taken for granted. The growing population shift into Riverside and San Bernardino counties should be a sign that now is not too soon to plan for its protection.

8 Part II/Monday, February 17, 1986



Los Angeles Times

A Times Mirror Newspaper

TOM JOHNSON, *Publisher and Chief Executive Officer*

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WILLIAM F. THOMAS, *Editor and Executive Vice President*

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LARRY STRUTTON, *Executive Vice President, Operations*



The following is from a letter written by Patsy Wade of the Sunset Society and enclosed with her season's greetings last December. It may be that winter is behind us for this year, but there are memories...

December 1985

Dear Friends,

It is really cold now, but sometimes the bite of the wind is a joy. Somehow you know you are alive when you can feel the cold and crystal fierceness of the wind...

I have been thinking of the past year. Life is always full of problems, big crises and little ones digging at you, but it is the people who touch your life with concern and caring that you remember.

And I have much joy to remember.

Love, Patsy

With permission.

The following is from House Beautiful, January, 1948 and is by Thomas D. Church. It was reprinted in the Jan. 1967 Kaktos Komments.

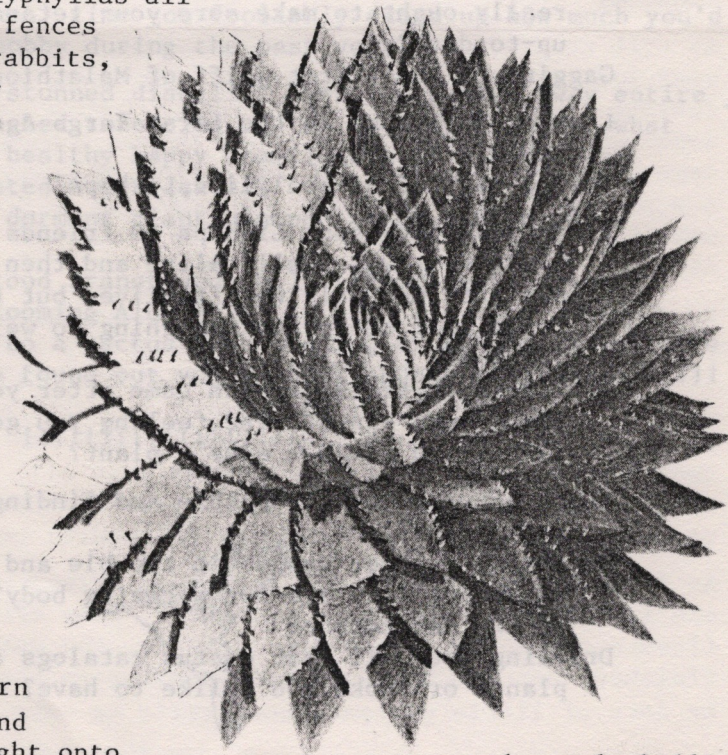
Garden beauty is more than planting deep...a garden has really lasting beauty only when its basic bone structure is so fine that it makes the view from a winter window as provocative as a summer blooming.

CANDLES AND TORCHES: ALOES IN BLOOM

The U. of California, Irvine, ARBORETUM is in full riotous bloom. If you remember an earlier article on the efforts of Prof. Koopowitz to create a gene bank for future generations thru cryogenics, you'll know the wild species he's trying to preserve are S. African bulbs and corms -- and ALOES. To get seed, the plants must bloom for him. And that they're doing NOW! As in WOW! The most spectacular Aloes are in the ground; and altho none are yet Huntington size, they're gorgeous. Planted at the base of the tree Aloes and Acacias are blooming mesembs, daisies, and other goodies. Altho not now in bloom, you'll even see a "baby toes" if you look hard. It's been there two years, right in the ground. Prof. K said he tried Lithops, but these are irresistible to birds who zero in on them as if attracted by radar. Also of interest is the dune garden, and also the Pelargoniums and Sarcocaulons in the ground. Most plants are labeled, but not all (labels can cost \$7/ea.); and if you want to volunteer or become a "friend"... well, the UCI Arboretum needs all the help it can get. Two final attractions: first is the view (this is expensive real estate), and second are the Aloe polyphyllas planted in barrels and already spiraling. Prof. K says that they're such high altitude plants (alpines really) that it's difficult to keep them happy at sea level. They might winter better in the San Bernardino Mtns.

(No joke). The A. polyphyllas all have their own little fences to protect them from rabbits, and they enjoy a peaty mix. By the way, some spiral to the left and some to the right, just in case you wondered. But come see for yourself!

The UCI Arboretum is open when the staff is there (usually M - F from 10 - 4), but call first just in case. (714) 856-5833. Coming from the 405 FWY, take the Jamboree exit towards the coast. Turn left onto Campus Dr. and then take the first right onto the small road that leads to the Arboretum.



Aloe polyphylla

"FIRSTS"

- Carol Wujcik

DO YOU REMEMBER...

Your very first cactus? Or succulent?

That feeling of proud parenthood upon seeing your first cactus flower develop on one of your very own plants?

The first time you found out a cactus could sunburn?

Visiting your first cactus nursery and feeling like a kid in a candy shop?

Discovering in horror your first spine-skeleton with the inside not only rotted but altogether gone? Or finding your first cactus "mummy"? The guilt of not seeing what was happening sooner?

Your first glimpse of the Huntington Cactus Garden where our beloved plants joyously run riot over every inch of space?

The high you felt when first seeing succulents in habitat, where they weren't planted by anybody except God...

The first (& 2nd & 3rd) time you were stabbed and knew you really ought to make sure your tetanus vaccination was up-to-date?

Gagging on that first whiff of Malathion? Indescribable...

Looking up in awe at the first large Agave spike you'd ever seen?

Seeing your first real, live, Lithops?

Proudly showing your Lithops to friends and family, who couldn't believe it was really alive and then were appalled to find out that not only was it alive, but that you liked it and had spent good money for something so weird, if not downright obscene?

The I-did-it feeling which came after you first identified an unnamed plant? The feeling you got after you first identified someone else's plant?

Depotting a plant in trouble and finding ants living in the body itself?

Depotting another cactus in trouble and find it attempting to reroot into its own decaying body? The combined feeling of awe and horror?

Drizzling over all your cactus catalogs and checking off the plants or books you'd like to have?

Do you remember...

The excitement of opening your first mail-order package and feeling like it was your birthday? (Actually, I don't remember the first package, just the best; it was from Howard Wise!)

Seeing your first amazing monstrose and crested plants?

The first time you did surgery on a succulent -- gritting your teeth, rereading the instructions, then cutting -- and wincing?

The first time you realized they were right about the horrors of Euphorbia sap?

The first time you realized they were also right about how easy it is to coat yourself in glochids -- but how wrong all that advice is about using scotch tape to remove them? (I use a disposable straight blade razor to shave them off).

The surprise and pleasure you felt when someone whose opinion you value first told you a plant was well grown.

The translucent silky sheen and irridescent colors of your first radiant Echinocereus flowers?

The first (and last) time you foolishly added up how much you'd spent on the hobby during the past year?

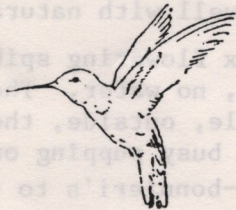
The sensation of stunned disbelief when you peeled away entire sheets of detached tubercles on the lower portion of what seemed to be a healthy happy Mammillaria -- like it was shedding unwanted lower leaves?

The first time a dormant plant plumped up or leafed out, just for you?

The moment you stood transfixed while a hummingbird visited one of your blooming Aloes?

Your first visit to a cactus club meeting or fellow collector's home, when you found out you WEREN'T ALONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



KALANCHOE BLOOMS



Along with some other members of the Crassula family, the Kalanchoes are busy flowering just now. They're short day plants, meaning they need longer hours of dark to initiate flowering.

Some Kalanchoes are in the horticultural trade primarily because of their flowers, but most of those we love most are grown for their foliage -- especially the fuzzies like *K. eriophylla* and all the *tomentosa* hybrids. (See drawing). The periscope-looking flower spikes sent up by the fuzzies are not only awkward, but tend to elongate the plant, coming as they generally do from the terminal shoots. This holds true for most of the non-fuzzies as well; and after or during flowering, new offshoots are produced, often too far up the stem. This tendency makes them look scraggly. Trying to thwart a Kalanchoe by removing the beginning bloom spikes is usually hopeless. New spikes are soon formed. Instead wait until the first flowers open -- then cut and use these remarkable fuzzy blooms in dry arrangements or by themselves in naturally colored, rough stoneware bottles or weed pots. They look ten times better this way than on the plant! With luck, your Kalanchoe will be satisfied and will return to leaf production.

As with many of the other Crassulaceae, you'll need to restart many of your Kalanchoes every so often if you're to keep them looking and feeling fit. There are exceptions. I have one *K. tomentosa* which somehow, thru no effort of mine, became bonsaied. It's been in the same pot 7 or 8 years, and has spreading, curving trunks. This year I top-pruned it and it's just now starting to look good again. But most Kalanchoes should be restarted from stem cuttings in fresh mix about as often as *Echeverias*.

By the way, *Kalanchoe marmorata*, the pen wiper plant, is a particularly rank grower, beautiful tho its foliage is; but its flower is exquisite, like a small white Frangipani bloom. Many Kalanchoes have small dainty flowers which look beautiful in small traditional vases. As with the flowers of many succulents, most won't usually wilt right away without water, so even a straw vase will work for awhile. No ucky mess. Experiment and see. Certainly the fuzzy flowers need no water, and these go so well with natural textures like stoneware.

As I type this, five or six flowering spikes of *K. gastonis-bonnieri* are in a white-glazed vase, no water. The effect is stunning, the flowers gorgeous. Meanwhile, outside, the mother plant~~s~~ is just about finished, but she has been busy pupping on the leaf tips so there'll be lots of little *gastonis-bonnieri*'s to take her place.

The following is from a British branch publication called Prickly Paragraphs, #55, July 1980, and is by Jerry Krulik, formerly from the frozen North (ie. Chicago), but now living in S. CA.

I TOLD YOU I COULD QUIT, DIDN'T I?

by Jerry Krulik

I think, perhaps it's only an idle dream, that I will no longer devote most of my waking hours to devising ways to get my hands on another cactus.

I've come to recognise collecting as a form of undiagnosed disease. Like the alcoholic who thinks he can have just one and he'll be fine, the cactus collector kids himself by saying "O.K., I've room for just a few more, so I'll get this one last *Espositoa*, maybe the matched pair for exhibition, and that will be that; I'll be finished." But an *Espositoa*, he soon discovers, leads to an *Oreocereus*, and the *Oreocereus* leads to *Thrixanthocereus*, which leads to a *Backebergia*. His family is impoverished, his children are forced to drop out of college, and when the man comes to shut off the electricity, he asks him whether he thinks free root run in a raised bed would be better than oversized clay pots. And the evenings now spent in darkness are filled with dreams of unseen treasures -- *Uebelmannia*, *Pilocopiapoa* and rare *Brachycereus*.

You want to know how I -- a notoriously weak person when it comes to this sort of self-indulgence -- have managed to put the brakes on my self-made juggernaut? Well, it wasn't easy, to say the least. At first, I tried the basic cure -- selling a plant in order to ease the pangs of having to buy another one this month. I then rationalised that I had the money, an empty space in the greenhouse, and I was entitled, indeed forced, to replace the plant I'd sold. I figured (this is the theory) that I would finally be glutted with the need to shop, bargain, and find excuses to acquire a new species that was nearly identical to one I already had. But this didn't work. Not only did I get the new plant, but I'd soon get homesick or lonesome for the cactus I'd sold in order to get the new one. I missed my old love at the same time I was patting my new honey.

Next I went the way a lot of people do when they quit smoking. So many smokes this week, so many fewer the next week, and lo and behold, finally no smokes at all.

I would only buy seeds and plants at the beginning of a new season when the catalogs first arrived. Doesn't this make sense to the well-known Rational Man? Of course it does, but the diseased mind is not rational. The sane man divides his year into the ordinary organised areas accepted by every horticulturalist. Spring seed sowing, summer repotting, flowering, and propagating by cuttings, fall collecting trips and rearrangement of the collection to fit the given space, winter

cleanup and housekeeping -- any overlap is of no consequence. But not the afflicted collector. I found, even fought against -- but helplessly -- the fact that a select collection of Conophytums were winter growers, and that Othonnas and Tylecodons fit in too. And by installing heating cables and growlux lamps, I could start seeds at any season.

And as if to give a drowning man a shove under in deep water, my local cactus club gave a big Crassula sale -- of which I had no special collection -- yet!

My wife mentioned that the weight of all the hanging plants was causing the eaves of the house to sag, and that none of the neighborhood children would play in our yard because of the cactus beds and Agave clusters. My children began worrying how they would do their homework without electric lights. The deep enjoyment I once felt in poring over seed lists and plant catalogues just before I went to sleep began to diminish under this constant harassment.

I was beginning to weaken, or as my family said to come to my senses, when I began to force them to come along on my visits to cactus shops. The sound of their shuffling bare feet in the background and the rustle of their tattered clothes often acted as a strong restraint against the lure of another Mammillaria cluster. And I found that I frequently left the store having bought nothing more than another bag of labels and a quart bottle of insecticide.

Risking the scorn of my fellow cactus club members, I stopped bringing all my best acquisitions each month. Instead, I began to read about cultivation methods, lighting, fertiliser and other neglected areas.

Then, I noticed that the flowering was improving. Where before I didn't care, just as long as they lived because I was just trying to build up my collection, I began to take an interest in the actual growing plants.

I began to realise that a lot of people I genuinely liked couldn't tell a Lobivia from an Echinopsis at a distance of thirty yards; some even quite a bit less. Many didn't recognise the different microgenera -- the subtleties of Bartschella, Phellosperma, Dolichothele, and Porfiria versus Mammillaria were beyond them. Moreover, they didn't even care.

My absence caused a few plant growers to send "Get Well" cards to the house, and one even sent a "Deepest Sympathy" note to my wife. I felt a welcome sense of relief when I sent a check to the light company, and I took great pride in the sight of my children wearing new shoes. I knew I was returning to normality when I could sit down and watch television without my repotting supplies by my side.

I resisted the impulse to celebrate my wedding anniversary by



getting a large "Golden Barrel" for my wife.

But the great sense of freedom didn't strike home until last summer when I was in London for a day. I did not go immediately to Kew Gardens, or to a single one of the famous nurseries. Walk by? Yes -- but I did not go in. My wife reminded me that it was Sunday evening when we arrived and they were all closed, but I knew in my heart that I had found a new strength. I took the Monday morning plane without a real regret.

It would be foolish to say I'll never buy another cactus, or sell one or trade around just a little. The world's greatest easy mark is no longer the pushover he used to be, no sireebob! But if you know where I could get my hands on a collection of about six different kinds of flowering size Copiapoas, at the right price of course, you know where you can reach me. Just don't call me at home, if you can manage it. If you do, and a lady answers, hang up.

Jerry, by the way, lives in Laguna Hills. But he's an excellent propagator, so no doubt by now has any number of Copiapoas if he was able to find seed.

MEMBER INFORMATION

GOOD NEWS! On Valentine's day Stan Oleson had a quadruple bypass operation. One week later he was home! And a day later I called Val and was able to talk to Stan himself! He said Valentine's day was perfect for a "heart job" and he was already up and about. You can't keep a good man down!

THERE'S SOME BAD NEWS TO REPORT: It's my understanding that today (Sun.) federal agents visited various growers in regard to plants on the endangered list. We all hope this will not cause too great a harm.

SHOW SCHEDULE: You may notice that the show schedule has been revised. Some classes have been "uncombined" for various reasons. We'll see how it works out; so if you have suggestions for next year's schedule, make notes for next year -- in writing or we'll all forget.

MEDALLIONS: Instead of one each for Best Individual Cactus & Best Individual Succulent there'll be three Best in each of these two divisions.

MORE ON THE SHOW - AND PREPARING FOR THE SHOW - NEXT MONTH.

Deadline for info. to be included in the April N.L. will be March 21st. Thanks.

CORRECTION: I misspelled Steve Reinhardt's name in last month's N.L. Sorry Steve!

CALENDAR

March 9, 1:30 P.M. - Our regular meeting, program by Woody & Tandra Minnich of Cactus Data Plants.

March 19, 7:30 P.M. - San Gabriel Study Group. Please see last month's N.L. for address.

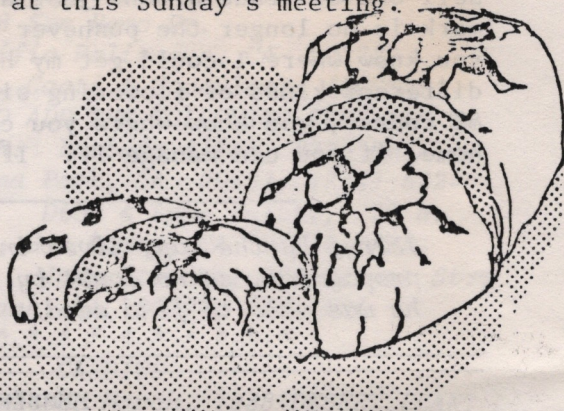
April 13, 8 A.M. - Our bus trip to Bill Baker's California Gardens and the Gay's Cactus Ranchito. Meet in parking lot at the S.C. Garden and bring lunch & cameras etc. Please sign up at this Sunday's meeting.

May 11, 12:30 P.M. - Our board meeting before reg. mtg.

July 13, 12:30P.M. - Our board meeting before reg. mtg.

April-May-June-July - Lots of area shows & sales

We regret not yet having all the info on the above yet, but will issue the special show/sale page next mo.



SOUTH COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER



Norma Holley

