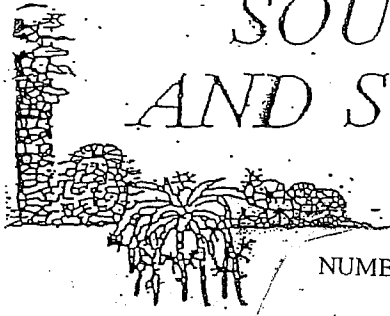


# SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 6

JUNE, 2007

GENERAL MEETING: Sunday, June 17, 1:30 P.M., South Coast Botanical Gardens Classroom

SUBJECT: Laurel Woodley, one of our own members, will give us a TOUR OF THE SOUTH COAST CACTUS GARDEN, and perhaps a bit more. Hopefully, all the "old timers" will be there to share some of the stories about the building of this fantastic garden as our Club originally laid out the garden; made mounds, walls, paths, and planted many of the older plants.

REFRESHMENTS: The following members are to bring refreshments for the June 17 meeting: Ed Curloe, Jim Gardner, and Laurel Woodley.

## MAMMILLARIA TETRANCISTRA

This small Mammillaria has a wide range, from California (Riverside County), extending into Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Sonora, and Baja California. It is found in sandy soils in grasslands and gravel on hills, at altitudes of 500 to 2,500 feet.

It is generally described as solitary or clustering, growing on tuberous roots, stems cylindrical to 4-6" tall, 2-2 1/2" in diameter. The black to brown central spines number 1 to 4, about an inch long; the radials are white and bristle-like and number 30 to 40 (3/8 to 1/2 inch long).

Flowers are large (1-1 1/2" in diameter), lavender with white margins; stigma lobes are green; fruit bright red, cylindrical.

John Pilbeam writes in "Mammillaria" (1999): "This is one of the most difficult species to grow in cultivation, and I have never got over my ridiculous feeling of surprise when I saw it growing so well in habitat. Sooner or later in cultivation it has a habit of suddenly collapsing. I have had most success growing it on its own roots by keeping it confined to a small pot, in very gritty soil, and with infrequent but thorough watering."

Elton Roberts, Ripon CA, writes in a privately distributed email: "This is one of the most difficult species to grow in cultivation? John is not the only person to say that I have heard that from many people over the years ... Hard to grow plants? Pay attention: the area where the plants come from has rain from about mid summer to the next spring. It may not be a lot over the winter but they get some winter rain. Here is the thing, from about mid to the end of April till the summer monsoons hit, the plants do not see a drop of rain. If you leave them powdery dry from say April 15 till at least July 15 the plants will be happy. It is the same for Pediocactus and Sclerocactus. These plants are sensitive to watering at this time. Other plants that grow in the same area are not so sensitive to watering at that time of year. These plants need that time of total dryness; they go dormant at that time. So if you want to grow the plants observe that dry time.

"Flowers are 4.5 cm across. They bloom when they come out of the dormant time. That is mid summer to late summer. With that blooming time they do not cross with other Mammillarias growing sometimes right beside them. In the Anza Borrego, Mammillaria dioica blooms very early in the spring. I have seen them in full bloom in March.

Elton has observed the plants in habitat from the Anza Borrego Desert to Table Mountain to Death Valley and to the East Mojave and north of Sonita, Arizona. He notes that the species exhibits quite a bit of variation over such a wide area of distribution.

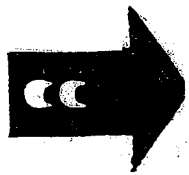
Fresno newsletter

SCC&SS OFFICERS: President, Dale La Forest (310)618-9881; 1st V. Pres., Hank Warzybok, (562)429-7110; 2<sup>nd</sup> V. Pres., Gary Duke, (714)377-0064; Treas., Marsha Huebner, (310)834-0263; Sec., Phillip Ross, (310)378-5748; Show Chr., Harry Fletcher, (310)538-4078; Sunshine Chr., Irma Rennie, (310)375-3790; Refreshments, Carol Causey, (310)675-5843; and Newsletter Ed., Vera Thaxton, (760)564-3285.

SOUTH COAST CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY  
2007 PLANTS OF THE MONTH

CACTI

SUCCULENTS



June Mammillaria

Euphorbia

July Favorite 3

Favorite 3

Aug Cereu (columnar cactus)

Xeric bromeliads

Sept Gymnocalycium

Agavaceae family

Oct

BREAK

Nov Miniature (under 3 inches)

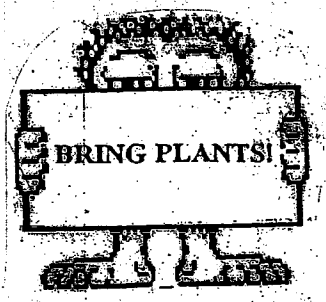
Miniatures (under 3 inches)

Dec

CHRISTMAS PARTY

PLANT OF THE MONTH RULES

- \* A maximum of three plants may be entered in each category (cactus and succulent).
- \* There will be two classes of entrants: novice and advanced.
- \* Intermediate entrants must have had the plant in their possession for at least six months; beginners, for three months.
- \* Entrants will receive 6 points for first place, 4 points for second place, 2 points for third place, and 1 point for third showing a plant that does not place.
- \* There may be up to three third places in a category. If plants are not deemed to be of sufficient quality, no place will be awarded.
- \* Entry tags must be collected by the person in charge of recordkeeping
- \* At the annual Christmas party, award plants will be presented to the ten highest cumulative point holders, regardless of class.



**MEMBERSHIP:** Do you have a cactus or succulent currently blooming? Do you have a plant whose name is "anonymous"? or do you need advice about a problem plant? If your answer to any of the questions above is "yes", BRING THE PLANT TO THE MEETING!! Specifically, bring it to the BRAG TABLE. This will give all of us opportunity to learn more about cacti and succulents.

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PLANT OF THE MONTH TOTALS

CACTUS		TOTALS		CACTUS		TOTALS	
ADVANCE	CACTUS			NOVICE	CACTUS		
	MAY				MAY		
Causey	2	4		Capaldo	4	27	
Duke	12	44		Caplan	2	4	
Warzybok	12	16		Hemingway	1	1	
				Ohlinder		7	
				Ponce		1	
				Thompson		6	
SUCCULENTS	MAY			SUCCULENTS	MAY		
ADVANCED				NOVICE			
causey		4	16	Capaldo		6	18
Duke		2	14	Caplan		4	15
Gardner			14	Hemingway		6	11
Hanna		12	34	Hulett		4	17
LaForest		5	12	Pearson		1	4
Warzybok		4	14	Ponce			12
woodley		3	7	Thompson			8

PLANT OF THE MONTH: MAMMILLARIA

Carol Wujcik, 3 -'85



*Mammillaria wildii*

Mammillaria is a popular, large genus of small, adaptable, rewarding cacti, beautiful, prolific, and floriferous, with a remarkable variety of spine colors, patterns, and textures. Many do well on windowsills and in group plantings. Many are relatively fast-growing and become specimens in only a few years, and so are suitable for the beginner. Others are more demanding, and new species are still being discovered, so there is much of interest for the specialist.

Habitat: Mexico, also the S.W. US, Central America, and the Caribbean.

From sea level to 8,000 feet.

Living in various situations including a few in humid climates, some grow on vertical cliffs etc.

Their distribution doesn't appear to be random, and experts are attempting to classify and make sense of it all.

The Name: Mammillaria can be interpreted to mean little tubercle. The common name is Pincushion Cactus. As for the abbreviation, technically it's M. followed by the species name, as in M. plumosa: But if you just want something a little shorter than Mammillaria, then it's Mamm., or Mam. I asked Woody Minnich which of these two was correct, and it became clear this was not a pressing question to him with all the taxonomic questions still to be answered. He felt either is ok. So if you're writing fast and informally, take your pick. Personally I like Mamm. as it makes the incomplete more complete.

Description: size - many are relatively small; shape - many are globular or short columnar; habit - many are clustering, some splitting dichotomously in "owl-eye" fashion, others offsetting; tubercles - more or less conical, arranged in spiraling rows; spination - delightfully varied, and there may be hairs or bristles in axils (at base of tubercles); overall look - often wonderfully geometric, neat, and colorful...cheerful.

Flowers: usually small...come from axils to form a circle around the crown of the plant.

Fruits: Juicy and usually red. Edible (if desperate).....

Sap: may be milky or watery, and some species switch back and forth just to keep taxonomists on their toes.

Tubercles: swell in good times, permitting more light to the plant body, and shrink in dry, poor conditions, thus reducing exposed body surface and creating a tighter, more protective covering of spines, hair etc.

Personal reminiscence: Once upon a time in 1971 in Ohio, Joe and I chanced upon a florists shop and saw there what I now know was a Mamm. rhodantha in a clay pot. I don't know what prompted me to buy it, but Joe acquiesced in this fateful decision. (Little did he know what was to come!) Anyway, the proprietor said to put the Mamm in a sunny window and give it a tablespoon of water once a month. All summer it sat in our southern kitchen window, and once a month it got its ration of water. One day I asked Joe if he thought it was shrinking. Hmm, yes, it was. It was smaller. Reverse growth. It was then that the Reader's Digest Garden Book arrived mail-order. Fate again. It had good advice re: succulents. Water well, then let dry out a bit. If root ball gets super dry, put in a tub of water & let sit. Then drain. This was the treatment my M. rhodantha got, and lo, it swelled. After awhile it shrank. Then it was watered. Then it swelled. Well, this was the most active plant I'd ever seen. It was neat. When it finally leveled off and began to grow - amazing! - I went out and bought more little succulents...and more...and more.....

Some individual species -

### PERSONAL FAVORITES

Many of the favored Mamms are "the fuzzies" like the Old Lady Cactus, and "the golden girls." If you refer to your cacti as "he's" and "she's", then your Mamms will be "she's" for sure. I think of them as some of the little feline personalities of the collection. Some will be cuddly and kittenish and soft, while others, though not usually sculptural as a cat is, are elegant and standoffish with an independent beauty to be seen but not touched, and certainly not coddled, much like the stereotype of the cat.



*Mammillaria hahniana*

Mammillaria bombycina: glorious spines combining geometrical orderliness, the white fuzzy look, and for contrast, the reddish spines - hooked spines! A visual delight.

Mammillaria carmenae: with soft, fuzzy-looking golden starburst-shaped spines. Again, the contrast of soft radiance with geometrical precision combines irresistably. The whitish flowers pale beside the spines.

Mammillaria crucigera: Remarkable, tough-looking but dainty little plant which divides dichotomously into multiple heads. In nature it grows on vertical walls of gypsum hills. Has a spare, precise beauty.

The Mammillaria elegans "complex": all are beautiful plants, as are

The Mammillaria hahniana "complex": which contains many of the most popular woolies and fuzzies, including the Old Lady, M. hahniana herself!

The word "complex" is a useful word you'll hear often in regard to inter-related species. It's often hard to tell where one species ends and another begins. They "grade" into one another in a shockingly loose way, Mother Nature not being especially tidy. Also she can fool the unwary by making species look the same at first, or even tenth, glance. "Complex" as a noun is a neat word to use because it says so little and so much, defines but doesn't, all at the same time. And it sounds good.

Mammillaria nejapensis: has strong spination combined with white wool and whiskers. It flowers easily and does best if given some noon shade. It performs well on a windowsill.

Mammillaria pennispinosa: Proof that small can be best! Wonderful feathery spines with longer hooked ones, a pinkish cast to the whole plant. Exquisite and delicate. Don't overwater. Will develop taproot so eventually may need deeper pot.

Mammillaria senilis: is one of the white "glassies" rather than one of the woolies, hairies, or fuzzies. The flowers are big and wonderful and rose-red. They shoot out through the white spines. What a contrast!

Mammillaria schiedeana: a soft, gold to white-gold spined plant which flowers happily each winter, temporarily displacing the relatively long dark tubercles. Pilbeam says "this species is now a little passé in fashion." Never mind, it's still an aristocrat, and like any cat you will ever meet, knows it!

**Sun:** Although many love the outdoors sun, many will do well and flower and grow on sunny windowsills. But if you move a greenhouse or windowsill plant outside, cover it for a week or so with one ply of a kleenex or provide some other filtering protection to allow the plant time to adjust to the ultraviolet.

**Mix:** The usual porous cactus mix will do, i.e. LGM with pumice.

**Feeding:** Your usual cactus feed will be ok.

**Water:** Generally, the usual watering - more when growing.

**Pests:** The usual, etc.

**Rotting on:** Once a year for young plants is recommended.

Every two years on average for biggies.

**Pot:** Most will be happy in a shallow pot or pan with drainage hole of course. Taprooted species need deeper accommodations.

**Propagation:** Seed, pups, or even tubercles (i.e. M. plumosa).



*Mammillaria plumosa*

## EUPHORBIA

The genus name comes from the Latin, *euphorbea*, which is from *Euphorbus*, a Greek physician of the first century A.D.

Euphorbias comprise such a large and diverse group of plants, one wonders how they are all able to be classified into one genus. Two characters common to the group are the milky latex and the peculiar floral structure. Many of the brightly colored "flowers" are not really true flowers at all but are colored bracts. These bracts are not flower petals, but a specialized leaf-like structure, most likely evolved in order to attract insect pollinators.

Cultivation of our plant of the month presents no particular problems. They will grow out in the garden if some care is given to provide a well drained location and some protection from freezing.

Propagation from the offsets or seed is easily accomplished. Euphorbia seed does not tolerate lime to any extent and may be partly responsible for poor germination.

*Euphorbia horrida* was discovered by J.F. Drege about 1830. Closely related to *E. polygona*, it is difficult to observe any difference between the two while they are young. The plants of *E. horrida* are not quite as tall or slender as those of *E. polygona*.

Other African Euphorbias include tree types such as *E. zoutpansbergensis* from the Transvaal. This plant reaches a height of up to 18 feet, though 10 to 12 feet is more common. The robust trunk supports a crown of slender ascending branches. Its diameter is exceeded only by *E. excelsa*. The species name commemorates the Zoutpansberg Mountain Range in the northern parts of the Transvaal.

The tree type *E. excelsa* reaches a height of 40 feet, though a height of 25 to 30 feet is more common. The lofty main trunk is topped with a beautiful crown of branches. It occurs on well drained, red sandy loam.

An interesting and desirable plant is the *E. bupleurifolia*, a wide ranging species, from the eastern Cape-Province into Natal. It has a peculiar habit of changing the sex of its cyathia (flowers) from male to bisexual and back again. While this change does not occur every year, it does allow one to gather seed from one plant.

Our friends, *E. obesa*, *meloformis*, *valida* and *symmetrica* are somewhat similar in appearance. They are all globose in form with the exception of the male *E. obesa*, which can reach a height of 12 inches or more. Unfortunately, there are many garden hybrids. Therefore, it is important that only hand pollinated seed be distributed under the species name. Seed sets easily in this group and germination can approach 90 to 95%. A minor problem, as with all Euphorbias, is that the seed capsules, when ripe, forcibly expell the seed some distance from the plant. All sorts of devices have been used to restrain the seed, everything to "super glue" to keep the capsules from opening, to nylon stocking caps and artfully constructed screen caps. Without the use of some device to keep the seeds from being scattered, seedlings magically appear throughout the garden.

### Literature cited:

The Euphorbia Journal, Volume 1, 1983; F. Horwood  
Lexicon of Succulent Plants, by H. Jacobsen; 1970  
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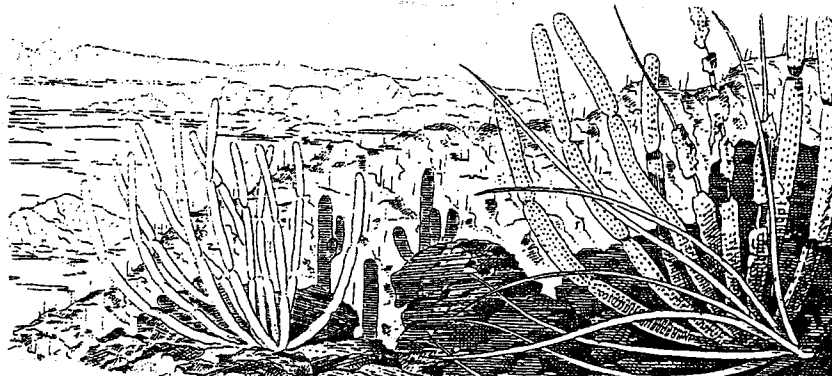
Edited by Fred Hutflesz

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2. John Pilbeam, Mammillaria, A Collector's Guide, Universe Books, 1981. pp.7 - 12, 68, 122.
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**CACTUS AND SUCCULENT  
CALENDAR OF UP COMING EVENTS FOR 2007**

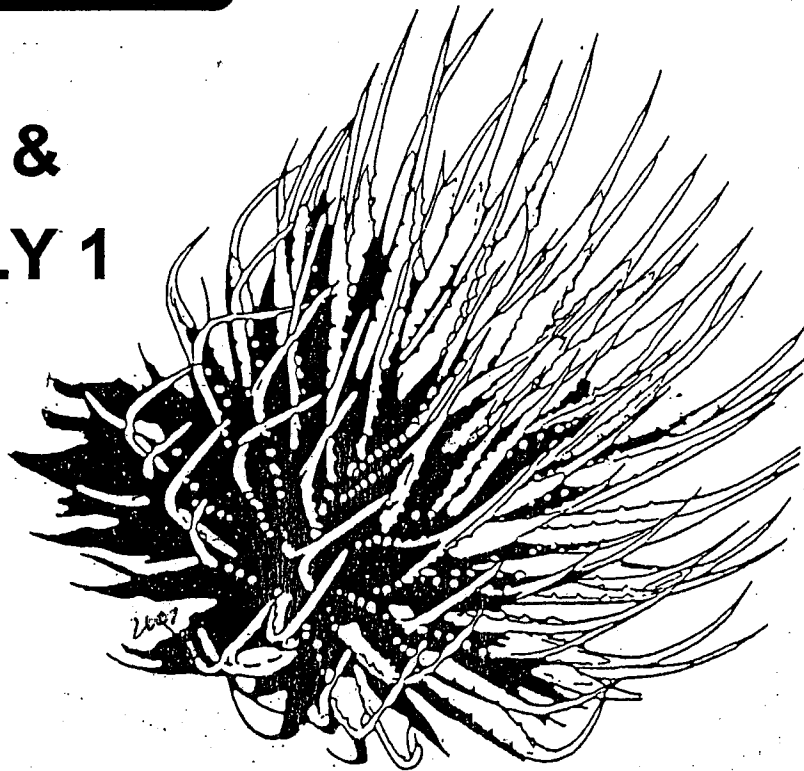
- JUNE 2 & 3rd**    **SAN DIEGO CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY -SHOW AND SALE**  
**BALBOA PARK, ROOM 101, SAN DIEGO, CA. INFO. -#619-477-4779**
- JUNE 9th**        **GATES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**SHOW AND SALE—SAT. 9 TO 4**  
**JURUPA MOUNTAINS CULTURAL CENTER, 7621 GRANITE HILL DRIVE**  
**GLEN AVON, CA    INFO. 909-360-8802**
- JUNE 9 & 10**    **LOS ANGELES CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE**  
**SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER, 16633 MAGNOLIA BL., ENCINO, CA.**  
**SHOW INFORMATION-CALL 818-363-3432**
- JUNE 29, 30**    **CSSA ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE -HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL**  
**& JULY 1**        **GARDENS AT 1151 OXFORD ROAD, SAN MARINO, CA.**  
**626-405-2160 or 2277 PLANTS SALES START JUNE 29<sup>TH</sup> THRU JULY 1<sup>ST</sup>**  
**THE SHOW OPENS ON THE JUNE 30<sup>TH</sup> THRU JULY 1<sup>ST</sup> TO THE PUBLIC**
- AUG. 18 & 19**    **22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL INTERCITY SHOW AND SALE-LA COUNTY ARBORETUM**  
**301 NO. BALDWIN AVE., ARCADIA, CA. INFO. CALL TOM GLAVICH**  
**AT 626-798-2430 or BARBARA HALL AT 818-368-6914**
- SEPT. 2**         **HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM**  
**ALL DAY AT THE HUNTINGTON**
- NOV. 10&11**    **SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY**  
**SHOW AND SALE— LA COUNTY ARBORETUM ADDRESS ABOVE.**
- DEC. 1 & 2**     **ORANGE COUNTY SHOW AND SALE AT THE FULLERTON ARBORETUM**  
**1900 ASSOCIATED ROAD, FULLERTON, CA 92831**  
**SHOW AND SALE OPEN FROM 10AM TO 4PM**  
**FOR INFORMATION CALL 714-870-4887**



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