

COMMUNIQUE

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc.
Meetings are held at **7:30 PM** on the 2nd Thursday of the month
in the Lecture Hall, Los Angeles County Arboretum, Arcadia
April 2004 Volume 37 Number 4

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, April 8th. The program for April will be given by Nels Christiansen and is entitled "Brazil." He'll tell us about his trip through Brazil and the cacti and succulents he encountered.

Plants of the Month: (see the attached write ups)

CACTI – *Uebelmannia* and *Discocactus* SUCCULENTS – *Kalanchoe*

Bring your specimens in for our monthly mini-show. It will help you prepare for the real shows and give you an additional opportunity to show others your pride & joy.

Study Group: Meetings are held at 7:30 pm. in the Grapevine room, San Gabriel Adult Center, 324 South Mission Drive. These exciting events feature expert group leaders and mentors, free giveaways (some of the best plants you'll ever get!), and lively discussion. Everybody learns something! Join us on Wednesday, April 21st. This month we will have our annual "Seed Workshop." Materials including fresh seeds will be available, and under the guidance of experts, we will have a hands-on chance to pot them up!

Refreshments: Rene Hernandez, Marilyn Mason and Lorraine Lutz will be provisioning the break table this month. We continue to need volunteers for coming months, so don't forget the sign-up sheet located at the refreshment table. Our thanks go to everyone who brought things for the March meeting.

Personnel Notices: The SCGCSS wishes to extend a warm welcome to its new members Rene Lima, Mitchell Menzer, and Solina Wong! Carefully review the COMMUNIQUE and the Roster, and avail yourselves of all the many benefits of membership in our warm and friendly club!

10 years ago: Woody Minnich gave a program on "Shows, Showing and Judging."

20 years ago: The program was "San Pedro Nolasco," given by Woody Minnich. The SGVCSS Annual Show was held April 17 to 22. 150 Cacti and 100 'Other Succulents' were shown.

30 years ago: A Plant Culture Workshop was held, with a panel of experts. Vivienne Doney showed her collection of "pet miniatures". The Fourth Annual Show was held at the Huntington Botanical Garden.

(Thanks go to Tom Glavich for providing this interesting feature)

2004 ROSTER: Thanks to Bill Gerlach, the 2004 Roster has been compiled, printed, and is ready for distribution. Pick up your copy at the April meeting and save the club some postage!

Get Your COMMUNIQUE Online: If you would be content to view the COMMUNIQUE on-line and not receive a copy by regular mail, thus saving the Club treasury about one dollar per copy, enter your name and E-mail address on the sign-up sheet available on the front table at the meeting, or send the information via E-mail to sgv_css@verizon.net.

SGVC&SS Online: <http://www.desertsong.com/sgvcss/> is the Club's web site. If you or someone you know has internet access be sure to have a look. The pages were authored and are maintained by Gunnar Eisel who has done a great job in creating an informative and classy site. You can also download a version of the COMMUNIQUE complete with color photos. Look for the COMMUNIQUE link at the site's main page.

Calendar of Events - 2004

- April 10th-11th** South Coast C&SS Show and Sale. 9-4. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes, CA. (310) 832-2262.
- April 24th-25th** Green Scene Plant Sale. Fullerton Arboretum.
- April 25th** South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes, CA. (310) 831-1209.
- May 1st-2nd** Sunset C&SS Show (Sat. 12-5, Sun 10-4) and Sale (Sat. 10-5, Sun 10-4). Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City, CA. (310) 822-1783.
- May 15th-16th** Epiphyllum Society Sale (15th & 16th) and Show (16th). LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA. (310)831-1209.
- May 16th** Huntington Plant Sale. 10-5. Huntington Botanical Garden, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. (626) 405-2160.
- May 22nd -23rd** 28th Gates C&SS Show and Sale. 9-4. Sat. show starts at 1pm. Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA. (909) 360-8802.
- June 5th-6th** San Diego C&SS Show and Sale, Balboa Park Room 101, San Diego, CA. (619) 477-4779.
- July 1st-3rd** CSSA Show and Sale. Opens 10:30. Huntington Botanical Garden, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA. (626) 405-2160 or 2277. Plant sales are on the 1st – 3rd. The Show opens to the public on the 2nd. Free Admission to Show and Sale. Thursday July 1st is a free day for the public to enter the rest of the Huntington.
- July 10th** Tentative date for the Club Picnic, to be hosted again by Jean Mullens at her home. Put the date on your calendar!
- August 14th-15th** 17th Annual Intercity Show and Sale. LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA. Call Tom Glavich at (626) 798-2430 or Gene Oster at (818) 998-9306.
- September 4th** Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium. 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA.

September 26th Long Beach Cactus Club Annual Auction. Dominguez Adobe, 18127 So. Alameda, Compton (Dominguez Hills), CA.

October 9th-10th SGVC&SS Winter Show. LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA.

December 18th The Club Christmas Party! Put this date on your calendar too!

March Plant-Of-the-Month Results:

Cacti – *Opuntioideae*

Succulents- *Haworthia*

Beginner

1 st	Roy Dodson – Horace Birgh	<i>Consolea rubescens</i>	1 st	Dick Tatman	<i>H. truncata</i>
2 nd	Barbara Nolan	<i>Opuntia rastiaria</i>	2 nd	Barbara Nolan	<i>H. hay*ghi</i>
3 rd	Roy Dodson – Horace Birgh	<i>Opuntia sp.</i>	3 rd	Oscar Flores	<i>H. sp.</i>

Intermediate

1 st	Sokhara Tan	<i>Opuntia sp.</i>	1 st	Carol & Paul Maker	<i>H. emelyae</i>
2 nd	Sokhara Tan	<i>Opuntia basilaris</i>	2 nd	Carol & Paul Maker	<i>H. koelmaniorum</i>
			3 rd	Carol & Paul Maker	<i>H. badia</i>

Advanced

1 st	Rita Gerlach	<i>Opuntia erinacea v ursina</i>	1 st	Frank Nudge	<i>H. truncata</i>
2 nd	Frank Nudge	<i>Opuntia basiliensis</i>	2 nd	Frank Nudge	<i>H. maughanii</i>
3 rd	Frank Nudge	<i>Opuntia microdasys</i>	3 rd	Rita Gerlach	<i>H. truncata</i>

Master

1 st	Karen Ostler	<i>H. aranea</i>
2 nd	Jim Hanna	<i>H. truncata</i>
3 rd	Karen Ostler	<i>H. bolusii Janesville form</i>

If you have a cactus or succulent related event that you'd like to have announced in the COMMUNIQUE, please forward the info to me at the address below. Please verify event dates - sometimes events are rescheduled or canceled without adequate advance notice.

Articles, Notices and Corrections can be sent via e-mail to: sgv_css@verizon.net or via post to: Paul Maker, 2235 Canyon Road, Arcadia, CA 91006. Material must be received by the last Thursday of the month to be considered for publication in the next issue of the COMMUNIQUE. Material in the San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society COMMUNIQUE may be reprinted by nonprofit organizations (unless such permission is expressly denied in a note accompanying the material) provided proper credit is given to the SGVCSS and the author and that one copy of the publication containing the reprinted material be sent to the editor. Reproduction in whole or part by any other organization or publication without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

Cacti of the Month April 2004 - *Discocactus* and *Uebelmannia*

Uebelmannia and *Discocactus* are both heavily ribbed Brazilian cacti. One genera, *Discocactus*, is quite old, first described in 1835. The first *Uebelmannia* were described in 1967. Although both are heavily ribbed, and come from the same general area, they are not closely related. Both however have some spectacular species, well worth the effort of growing.



Uebelmannia are (as far as known) confined to a single state in Brazil, Minas Gerais, just inland from Rio de Janeiro, while *Discocactus* can be found further inland and South in the states of São Paulo, Paraná, Mato Grosso, and crossing into Paraguay, and even into the Southeastern most state of Bolivia, Santa Cruz.

Both genera have similar cultivation requirements. They grow in rocky quartzite soil, often protected by nurse shrubs. The soil contains the decaying remains of bromeliads, lichen, and other organic matter, and is acid. The humidity is high, particularly during the growing season. Neither will tolerate cold, and particularly cold and wet. *Uebelmannia* will scar if the temperature approaches 40, even if bone

dry. Most references recommend keeping it above 55.



Discocactus horstii entered by Duke and Kaz Benadom in the 2003 CSSA Show
Photo by T. Nomer

The distinguishing characteristics of *Discocacti* are their globular to flattened globular shape, a cephalium, and fragrant night blooming flowers. The only other globular species with a cephalium is *Melocactus*, not a close relative. Unlike *Melocactus*, the cephalia stay relatively small, is almost always white, has long wool, and a few dark spines. The cephalia of *Melocactus* are generally darker, with short hairs, and form columns with age. An important difference between the two is that the onset of a cephalium in *Melocactus* terminates vegetative growth. The body no longer gets larger. *Discocacti* have ring-meristems (a ring of growth cells) that surround the cephalium, and allow the body to continue to grow after the cephalium forms.

The distinguishing characteristics of *Uebelmannia* are the rows of bristle-like

spines on the ribs. The flowers are small, grow close to the crown, and are yellow to yellow-green. The first *Uebelmannia* to be found had a close resemblance to some *Parodia*, also a Brazilian genus, and it was only when they flowered that it was realized that they were a new species.

As might be expected with genera that grow in a limited locality, and in a similar environment, the discoverers of some of the species are closely related. The Horst of *Discocactus horstii* (one of the best of the *Discocactus*) was also the discoverer of *Uebelmannia pectinifera*, the best of the *Uebelmannia*. Buining described and named: *Discocactus horstii*; the genus *Uebelmannia* (after the cactus importer Uebelmann); and *Uebelmannia pectinifera*. Buining also has a *Notocactus* and a *Uebelmannia* named after him.

Propagation from seed is relatively easy, although the seed (particularly *Uebelmannia*) is harder to come by and more expensive than most.

Particularly Interesting Species

Discocactus horstii is without a doubt the best of the genus. It flowers when small, as little as 2 inches across. The cephalium is particularly hairy, and the fragrant flowers can be more than 2 inches in diameter, larger than the body of the plant when young. It is unfortunately one of the harder to grow. It rots easily, from the roots up. There are a number of *D. horstii* hybrids that also flower well, and are easier to keep alive.

Discocactus magnimammus is a larger plant, making a more flattened globe. The

ribs are subdivided into large rounded tubercles (thus its name). It has short light brown, curved spines, and a cotton like cephalium.

Uebelmannia pectinifera is the best and most sought after of the genus. The body color can be any color from gray to brownish green to a dark purple, depending on the time of year and growing conditions. It does not like full California sun. The spines form continuous lines of short stiff bristles, much like a brush. It is very variable, and worth growing from seed to see the genetic variation that even a few plants will have under identical growing conditions. **Var. *pseudopectinifera***, is similar, (on a bad hair day) and greener (the spines are not brush-like).

Uebelmannia gummifera is dark gray-green with small areoles that nearly touch and white spines. A stunning plant when grown well,

References

- Cullman, Gotz and Groner, **The Encyclopedia of Cacti**
E. Haustein, **The Cactus Handbook**
J. Pilbeam, **Cacti for the Connoisseur**
Tom Glavich March 2004
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San Gabriel Valley Cactus and Succulent Society

Succulent of the Month April 2004 - *Kalanchoe*



Kalanchoe marmorata

Kalanchoe is one of the main genera of leaf succulents in the *Crassulaceae* Family. *Kalanchoe* are winter growers, and generally look their best in late winter and early spring. *Kalanchoe* is closely related to three other genera, *Cotyledon*, *Adromischus* and *Tylecodon*; many members of all four families were originally described as *Cotyledon*.

Kalanchoe is a pan tropical genus, with a large number of species in Africa and Madagascar, with significant (but less well known) populations in Socotra, India, tropical Asia, Indonesia, and a few in Central America. *Kalanchoe* is by far the most widely propagated and grown succulent plant in the world. It is produced by the millions as a winter houseplant all over the world. The most popular of all is *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*, from a cloud forest on Mount Tsaratanana in north-eastern Madagascar. Cultivars with red, yellow, orange and even purple flowers developed from this species are produced each year by vegetative propagation (usually by micropropagation or cloning) in large commercial nurseries and sold in florists, supermarkets and garden shops. It is virtually indestructible, and grows and

blooms through the winter in heated apartments, offices, etc. with little care. It eventually gets leggy and stops blooming, and is generally thrown out during a spring cleaning.

Kalanchoe care in Southern California is extraordinarily easy. They tolerate light frosts and do well outside in our rains. A few of the more tropical species are sensitive to cold, but most tolerate any weather we get without more than a few dropped leaves. Most of the species sold by florists will do well as bedding plants in local gardens. Producing a show quality plant requires a bit more work. Pruning and pinching of growth tips to encourage side growth is required to get a full bodied plant. Since most of the cultivated species come from the cloud forests of Madagascar, they never go through long periods of dryness, and require some watering and moisture even during their summer dormant period.

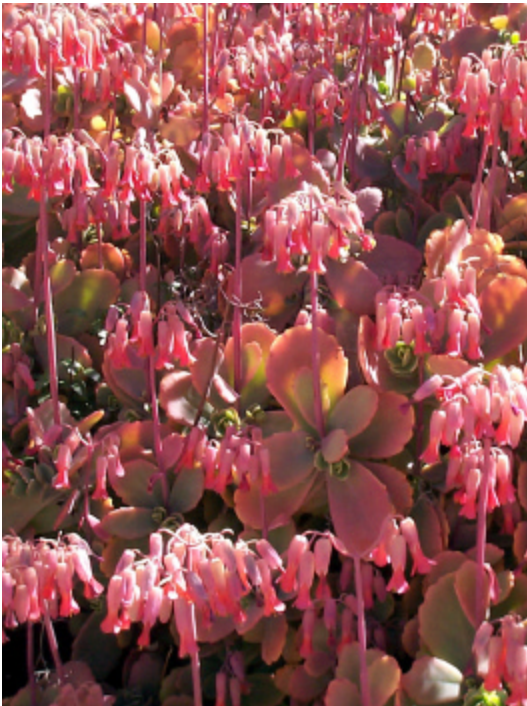
Propagation is easy. Take a cutting. Stick it in some potting soil. Success is virtually guaranteed. There is no need to wait for the end to dry, no need for growth hormones, etc. Leaves can also be rooted, and many leaves, falling from a plant will often root on the potting bench or in neighboring pots. Seed is rarely available, but is easily grown, and sows well in the fall. Growth is fairly rapid, and flowers during the next winter can generally be expected.

Although pot grown *Kalanchoe* lose their bottom leaves when they are stressed for water, *Kalanchoe* grown in the ground do not have this problem. Much larger and

better looking plants can be grown in the ground than can ever be grown in pots. Plants grown in the ground look much more like those from habitat.

Kalanchoes to Keep

Kalanchoe beharensis is a variable large leafed plant from Madagascar. There are several unusual shaped and colored cultivars available, including 'Fang' and 'Oak Leaf'. The leaves are often felt-like, with a mixture of green and brown.



Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi

Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi is another variable species, common in the florist trade as well as succulent shows. There are many varieties and cultivars, and several interesting variegated forms as well. It has blue-purple to gray to white leaves, depending on the cultivar. It is weak stemmed, and is often grown as a sprawling or even hanging plant.

Kalanchoe rhombopilosa is a small plant, reluctant to branch, with dense beautiful gray leaves covered with red spots and lines.

Kalanchoe schizophylla is a climber, looking more like a vine than a shrub. The stems grow up to 20 feet, and the leaves are extremely variable with age, so much so that leaves only a few feet away on the same stem look like they come from different plants.

Kalanchoe synsepala has great blue-green leaves with red to purple serrated edges. It produces offsets on long trailing stems. It is great as a hanging plant, or in a show pot.

Kalanchoe tomentosa is a wonderful densely leafed shrub. The leaves are green and white and feel as if felt covered. When given enough light and water, the edges turn red or brown. It is easy to grow poorly, but very hard to grow well.

Kalanchoe uniflora is another climbing species. In spite of its name, the flowers occur in groups of three, with many groups per plant. It is naturally epiphytic, and is happiest as a hanging plant.

References

- W. Rauh, **Succulent and Xerophytic Plants of Madagascar**
- M. Sajeve and M. Costanzo, **Succulents, The Illustrated Dictionary**

Tom Glavich March 2004