

Epi News

San Diego

Epiphyllum

Society

~~Post Office Box 2852 • San Diego, California 92112~~

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OCTOBER 12, 1983

MEETING: 2nd Wednesday 7:30 PM, Room 101 Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

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GENERAL MEETING, OCTOBER 12

The meeting this month will be another good one, with member Ron Miller as guest speaker. Ron will present a program of the progressive photos he took of the Wild Animal Park Epiphyllum Shadehouse completed this summer.

Those signed for October:

Elinor Berry	Christine Sanchez
Margaret Blake	Edweenia Viloría
Sylvia Duckworth	Toini Wainwright
Vernon Hook	Rod & Joyce
Noelle Kenyon	Carstensen
Mary Killian	



OCTOBER REFRESHMENTS

...Penny Bunker

With the fall days upon us, people and flowers should be doing better. However, our group doesn't falter with folks continuing to attend the meetings. There were 176 last month, although many fail to register - that's the actual count (I must know so we have enough plates and cups). Thanks to everyone contributing to the refreshment table.

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

...Gene Schmedding

In spite of the hot and humid night, we had a very good turnout at the regular meeting in September. Much to everyone's surprise, 170 members and 6 guests braved the possibility of melting into puddles in their chairs.

George French was our speaker of the evening, and the anticipation of seeing some of George's slides of his wonderful seedlings, I am sure,

was the motivating force to bring so many members out on a night like that.

There was also a nice surprise for the Society. Jim Gibbons, Horticulturist of the Wild Animal Park, and Mr. Sheldon Campbell, President of Board of Trustees at the San Diego Zoo, presented the Epi Society's Wild Animal Park committee with a beautiful plaque in thanks for all their dedication and hard work. The committee consists of Nate and Dorothy Ogdon, Howard Jones, George French, and Dick Chadwick. The committee accepted the plaque for the Society. The Society's thanks for their thoughtfulness goes to Jim Gibbons and Mr. Campbell.

Bob and Lois Burks of Epi Center brought several small pots of Christmas cacti and apocrophyllum cuttings. Several of the Christmas cacti were the newly developed yellow. Those of us that bought a ticket for a dollar, and were lucky enough to get to the table before all of them were gone, really got a bargain. They are a great many dollars more in the various epi catalogs. Also, the aporo cuttings were from newly developed stock that not too many people have in their collection yet. Bob and Lois - we all thank you and appreciate your generosity.

Kathy Van Arum, Chairman of the Mother's Day show, announced the theme for next year's show. It is "California Odyssey for 1984". There is plenty of time to work on an idea for your table, so it should be an outstanding show.

Helen Barkdoll would like to have the names of any off-season blooms. There is a set up at a table in the meeting room where you can write the name of your plant that blooms off-season. Helen is heading a research effort to learn more about the scientific aspects of the epi's and maybe the winter blooms may tell her something.



BOTANICAL GARDEN FOUNDATION SEPTEMBER FAIRE.

This was a very successful affair and well attended and enjoyed by the following members of the Epi Society: Elsie Tremblay, Kathy Van Arum, Helen Barkdoll, Gene Lund, and Andy and Thelma Capp. I understand they distributed quite a few cuttings even without a flower to show! Good work, gang!



AWARDS DINNER

...Dorothy Breining

The Christmas Dinner Awards Banquet this year will be on Wednesday December 14 (our regular meeting night). Tickets are \$11.00 per person which is the cost of the meal. The Society is providing the entertainment and gift plants for service to the Society.

If you are planning to take part in the plant exchange, please bring a 4" rooted cutting - something you would like to receive yourself, wrapped in holiday wrap to cover the whole thing, including the name. Tickets go on sale at the Oct. meeting. There are 150 tickets, so first come, first served. However, deadline is December 1.

Dorothy Breining
605 Melrose Ave.
Chula Vista, CA 92010
phone: 427-9306



It is with sadness that we note the death of Mrs. Lucile Irwin this September at her home in Monrovia, California. Mrs. Irwin was the widow of Professor Herbert S. Irwin. They were long-time members of the Epiphyllum Society of America; Mrs. Irwin was the sister of the late Miriam Troxell.



HISTORIAN

Jack Bradley is now Historian for the Epi Society. If you have anything of a historical nature relating to the Society, please send it to Jack (newspaper clippings, snapshots, etc.)

Jack Bradley
600 Melrose Ave.
Chula Vista, CA 92010

NOW IS THE TIME, November-December

...Frank Granatowski

Now is the time:

- to withhold fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen, (the first number in the formula i.e., 4-10-8), thus allowing the plant to become semi-dormant.

- to protect plants from exposure to the elements. Frost, hail and strong wintry winds can cause irreparable damage. Overexposure to harsh winter sunlight can be as detrimental as exposure to the hot summer sun.

-to transplant into larger containers those plants that are not expected to bloom next spring.

-to check the apple (seed pod). Ripened apples may be picked and the seeds planted. However, do not rush this procedure. Germination of the seeds will be vastly improved when the apple has become fully-matured.

- to take advantage of the winter rains, even prolonged rains will have no harmful effect on epi hybrids that are planted in good porous soil and they will tend to leach the soil of accumulated salts. Collection of rain water for future use is strongly advised. Store in covered opaque containers to prevent mosquito larvae and buildup of algae.

- to maintain good grooming of of your plants. Prune out dead, unsightly, and non-productive branches to conserve the plant's energy.

Keep containers free of debris, and last but not least, bait for slugs and snails. A few granules of SLUGETTA placed in the base of the

container has proved to be a very effective control and leaves little or no unsightly residue.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

...Grey Balvin

The monthly meetings of the Research Committee have been changed to the 3rd Monday of every month, Casa del Prado, Room 104, 7:30 pm.

EDUCATION

...Helen Barkdoll

The Education group will meet Saturday October 15, at 10 AM. The meeting will be at George French's home, 3624 Voltaire St., San Diego (Point Loma). George and Madeline have so graciously offered to host the group as George will explain his theories to develop disease resistant epis.

The initial meeting of the Education group met in Gene Lund's garden. Gene demonstrated his potting mix, and several members spoke up and offered additional information as to what they would like to see investigated. A handout of suggested easy experiments was distributed, but many more extensive and innovative projects were enthusiastically discussed. It seems that each one had his own pet project that he was willing to talk about and exchange information. Suggestions flowed about how to help each other.

The Education committee hopes to have a floating, revolving meeting place so that we will be better able to assist each other in our pursuit of scientific knowledge. We plan to document our progress and when we have accumulated sufficient data we will present an interesting and stimulating slide program of all the exciting new developments we have discovered.

Please remember to make a note

of your epi's that bloom this month and every month.

Some epi's that bloomed in September:

Ballarat	Nefertiti
C.P. Snowflake	Oxypetalum
Confetti	Pegasus
China Bowl	Prof. H. Irwin
Drama	Pumilum
Gladys Jones	Sitka
Jennifer Ann	Strictum
Monestery Gardens	
Moonglow	
Valiant Spirit	
Vista Star	



HOW ABOUT A SEED EXCHANGE?

...Dick Chadwick

Many of us are interested in trying to develop a new and exciting hybrid Epiphyllum. One of the main problems is that a lot of us are pushing middle age, say 60 years plus. It takes from two years on some of the miniatures to 5-7 years on the other epis to produce the first flower. We would all like to see the results of our efforts to create a new and exciting flower but shy push our luck? My own example is that I have enough seedlings and new seeds planted that will keep me busy through the year 2000. I don't want and probably won't stop hybridizing. What to do with the extra seed?

How about free seed or a seed exchange? Out of towners or international members could possibly send postage to our "Seed Editor". I and many other members are willing to provide seed. I am willing to do some custom hybridizing, within the limits of my plants, for size, color, multi-blooms, etc.

Please let our Seed Editor know if you are interested in such a program. Also, if possible "why" you think a particular cross would make a good plant or flower. (Editor's Note: Dick didn't tell me who the "Seed Editor" is as of the deadline for this month so if you would like to communicate to the "S.E." try me temporarily and I'll see that Dick gets the info...Pat Stebbins)



This appeared in the 9/2/83 issue of the Wall Street Journal. Chuck Everson sent it to me and says that Jerry Williams worked very hard to get it published. Well, I think it is a jewel, and one of those things that is sure to get you hooked when you read it! Thanks, Chuck.
(—that is, those of us who are not already hooked!)

Lust in His Heart for

Jennifer Ann

Those three behemoths in their hanging baskets take up far more than their share of window space. Furthermore, when they're not in bloom, from mid-June until late April, they border on the grotesque. With their round and spiky stems jutting outward and upward and their thick, fleshy leaves (technically not leaves at all, but flattened stems), they look like something H.G. Wells might have dreamed up for a Martian landscape. During their off season, several outspoken guests have asked what on earth they were, in tones they might have used had there been, say, dead geese hanging in the window. But visitors who see them in bloom usually show a little proper awe and respect, for they are unquestionably the most beautiful of all flowering house plants.

Their botanical name is epiphyllum, which some who grow them shorten to

Gardening

by Allen Lacy

"eppy." They're also called orchid cactus, which is appropriate for two reasons. First, they are a cactus, though not of the kind that grows in deserts and is a near-teetotaler when it comes to water. Eppies are hybrids among several genera within the cactus family which are natives to the tropical rain forests of Mexico and Central America, where they grow, as epiphytes, on trees. Second, their blossoms are as opulent and richly colored as those of any orchid.

I got started with orchid cactus about 10 years ago, when I ordered three unnamed rooted cuttings from a mail-order nursery in California. They turned into enormous and ungainly plants in fairly short order, but it was three years before I saw the first blooms, two tiny greenish-pink flowers produced near the bottom of the long, trailing "leaves" of one of the plants. I wasn't at all impressed, and almost threw the plant away because such measly flowers hardly seemed to justify the unsightly jungle in my window.

I'm glad I procrastinated in hauling my eppy to the compost heap. Over the next three weeks the flowers swelled in size and intensified in color until they were just about the handsomest things I'd ever seen—a deep and vibrant pink, five inches across, formed something like a lotus blossom. The following year it bloomed again, producing seven or eight blossoms. A second joined it in blooming, this one with much smaller but more abundant trumpet-shaped blossoms of fuchsia red. A year later I had all three in bloom, and the last was the finest of the three. It produced five cigar-shaped buds which grew fatter and fatter until finally opening into a flower so lovely I picked up the telephone and invited friends in to bear witness.

Epiphyllums aren't for the impatient. People who want instant gratification from their house plants are best advised to forgo them. But their care is simple and undemanding, their problems are few, and the enormous beauty of their flowers makes the long wait from rooted cutting to mature plant entirely worthwhile.

We've never repotted an orchid cactus, having read somewhere that they like to be potbound, as do clivia and agapanthus. In late June, after they've finished flowering, we take them outdoors to spend the summer, hanging them beneath the branches of a maple tree to keep them away from slugs, who like nothing better for dinner than orchid cactus stems. In autumn, after the night temperatures have dropped into the 40s, they come back to the living room to an east window. The room is generally quite cool, 60 degrees or so. The eppies are allowed to rest until early March—watered sparingly about once a month and not fertilized. Then they're given a good soaking with 20-20-20 liquid fertilizer, the thermostat is turned up to a roaring 70, and the first buds appear about six weeks later.

This regimen seems to have served my plants well, but not long ago I decided to check it out with Rainbow Gardens, a nursery specializing in the things, whose ad I'd seen in Pacific Horticulture (the nursery's address: Box 721-W, La Habra, Calif. 90631; color catalog—\$1). Jerry Williams, one of the owners, said my method was basically OK, with two exceptions. The fertilizer we've used is far too rich in nitrogen, which only encourages rampant foliage. He recommended either 0-10-10 or 2-10-10, from the end of dormancy in March at monthly intervals until bloom stops in June. He also suggested that I fertilize the plants three times during the summer with liquid fish emulsion.

Mr. Williams is a man in love with eppies, a true enthusiast. He suggested that I join the Epiphyllum Society of America and gave me the address (Box 1395, Monrovia, Calif. 91016; dues \$5). Or if I preferred I could join the San Diego Epiphyllum Society (Box 2852, San Diego, Calif., 92112; dues \$6). And he's kindly disposed toward his competition, since he threw out the names of two other good nurseries, the California Epiphyllum Center (Box 1431, Vista, Calif., 92083; catalog \$1) and Greenlife Gardens (Griffin, Ga., 30223; catalog \$1). He promised to send me a catalog, for which I thanked him, although my intent was to stay with the three plants I've got, considering the room they take up.

The catalog just arrived and it proves to be my undoing, as catalogs generally are. I thought they came only in shades of pink and red. I was wrong. Calisto is white, Jennifer Ann is a luscious yellow, and Malcho's Beauty is a dandy purple. Furthermore, it seems that after the hybrids finish blooming, the epiphyllum season can be extended six weeks by planting some of the wild species, all of which seem to be white, native to Mexico, night-bloom-

ing and fragrant.

Maybe I'll order just one. Or two? Or three? Or maybe I'll get rid of one schleffera, seven large begonias, a dieffenbachia, an immense pot of papyrus, six asparagus ferns, a hefty *Ficus benjamina*, several hanging baskets of Swedish ivy, two hoyas, a split-leaf philodendron, a number of Wandering Jews, some Boston ferns and a few other items in the plant menagerie inhabiting the windows, so that I may have eppies, and have them more abundantly. After all, I won't have to get rid of all these other house plants immediately. Rooted cuttings are small.

There's lust in my heart for Jennifer Ann.



Yellow evening sun...
Long shadow
Of the scarecrow
Reaches to the road

Shoha

CLASSIFIEDS

SOME GARDENING EVENTS IN OCTOBER!

Oct. 15 S.D. CHAPTER, CALIF. NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ANNUAL PLANT SALE
Casa del Prado, Patio A
Sat. 10 am to 3 pm

Oct. 15, 16 IKENOBO CHAPTER OF S. D. 7TH EXHIBIT OF IKEBANA ARRANGEMENTS
Casa del Prado, Majorca Rm.
Sat. & Sun. 11 am to 4:30 pm - Free

Oct. 18 SAN DIEGO FLORAL EVENT
S.D. FLORAL ASSO. MEETING & 2ND FALL FESTIVAL - OCTOBERFEST
Casa del Prado, Majorca Rm.
Tues. 6:30 pm Information: 282-5762

Oct. 22 thru 30 LOS ANGELES STATE & COUNTY ARBORETUM "THE WORLD IN CALIF. GARDENS" 301 N. Baldwin, Arcadia, California - Weekdays Noon to 8 pm. Weekends 10 am to 9 pm (Oct. 30 only: 10 am to 5 pm) Admission \$3.50 (includes parking)

CALIFORNIA EPI CENTER will be open by "appointment"...just call to see if we're here, and if we are you're welcome to come by...for those of you who would like to select your plants in person rather than ordering by mail. As usual, we have a very large selection of rooted epiphyllums, rhipsalis, rattail cacti and holiday cacti. And, we have a good selection of rooted epiphyllums that are not in the 1983 catalog. If you'd like our current catalog, send \$1.00, which you may deduct from your first order. California Epi Center, P. O. Box 1431 (1444 E. Taylor St.) Vista, CA 92083 Phone (619) 758-4290

NAME TAGS

Jeannie Burger will take your order for a SDES nametag (blue plastic with a pin-back). They are \$2.65 including tax. Call Jeannie, 280-6747