

The

Central

Spine

THE CENTRAL SPINE

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PRESIDENT: FRED KASPAR
EDITOR: VERA GAMET

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AUTHOR UNKNOWN

FROM C.S.S.A. 1985
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HOW IT ALL BEGAN by Frank Hennessey

Since April is the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society perhaps a few words on how it all came about would be in order.

Early in April of 1973, at a meeting of the CACTOMANIACS at the Desert Botanical Garden, Henry Triesler and Bob Moulis discussed the possibility of forming a chapter of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America in Phoenix. They discussed the subject with W. Hubert Earle, the director of the Desert Botanical Garden, since they did not want to infringe on the "Cactomaniacs" a social society which was an auxiliary of the Garden, acting as a volunteer group which assisted the Garden in putting on functions.

Mr. Earle, who was a Fellow of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, had wondered why such a group had not been formed before since he was sure there were enough cactophiles in the area to support such a chapter.

An organizational notice was sent to all interested persons that were known at the time. An exploratory meeting was held at the home of Henry Triesler, 324 East Sheridan in Phoenix, on April 13, 1973.

Attending were Henry, Bob Moulis, Lew and Barcia Bremer, Lee Tollison, Warner Dodd, Frank and Phil Hennessey, Martha Chester and Genevieve Oppen.

It was decided that there was enough interest to form a chapter, and the next meeting was scheduled for May 27, 1973, at the Moulis home, 13431 North 33rd Place in Phoenix.

In the interim, since Bob and Henry were going to the convention at Las Vegas, they would be our representative to find out how to start the chapter and to become affiliated with the C.S.S.A.

Additional prospects were Elaine Moulis, W. H. Earle, and Kent Newland of the Boyce Thompson Arboretum. Henry Triesler was elected temporary chairman, and the by-laws were drafted and approved. The name the CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY was adopted. The fiscal year was to be from July first to June thirtieth. A copy of the by-laws was sent to the C.S.S.A. for approval. Dues were set at \$10.00 with \$1.00 for spouse. Included was a subscription of the CACTUS AND SUCCULENT JOURNAL

Officer were elected as follows:

President	Henry Triesler
Vice President	Robert Moulis
Secretary	Frank Hennessey
Treasurer	Lewis Bremer III
Affiliate Representative	Warner Dodd

Henry Triesler and Lew Bremer gave a report of the Las Vegas Convention. Phil Hennessey displayed the first "show and tell" a Rebutia krainziana in full bloom. We then toured the amazingly beautiful garden at the Moulis home.

The third meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Chester, 5437 East Yale, Phoenix, on June 24th. New members at the meeting were Ailliam Chester, Mrs. Doris Boyce, Mrs. Lee Tolleson (Fran), Rod McGill, Margaret Caldwell and Sharon Fairchild.

Our by-laws were accepted by the C.S.S.A. as well as our own society. It was decided that July 1, 1973 was to be the cut-off date for charter membership.

Other members added by July 1st were Belle Cooper, Beverly Dodd, Lucille Earle, J. Whitran Evans, Chester Oppen, John and Nevelyn Hopkins, totalling 26 members for the official opening of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society.

The meeting of July 29th was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Tolleson, with Bob and Clara Bribbenow as new members. It was agreed that we would meet on the last Sunday of each month.

The August meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lew Bremer in Sun City with Stanley Jones of Cave Creek and L well Bokken of Tempe being added to the roster. Lew Bremer gave a tlak of curyphanthas and his research on this genus. He has described a number of plants of this genus in the Cactus and Succulent Journal as SPECIES NOVA.

The September meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Warner Dodd, when we were invited to put on an exhibit at the State Fair. We accepted. Warner Dodd headed a committee consisting of Genevieve Oppen, Martha Chester, Nevelyn Hopkins and Margaret Caldwell and our first show as a society was very well accepted by the public.

Boyce Thompson Arboretum invited the group for the October meeting.

The November meeting was held at the Desert Botanical Garden where we toured all of the new facilities, and saw slides presented by Witt Evans. The December meeting was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Earle on the 30th of the month.

We continued to meet at the homes of members until August 1974 when the Desert Botanical Garden became our official home. All of the first slate of officers were re-elected. In October our second printed membership roster showed 51 members and we were off and running.

In November Kent Newland showed an advertisement for a "Cactus Smasher" which was to be attached to the bumper of off-road vehicles. We passed a resolution banning such an item and sent copies of the resolution to 25 people in politics, to organizations, and to the manufacturer of the item, as well as the magazine carrying the ad. The manufacturer withdrew the "smasher" from the market. We received much publicity and public commendation nation wide for our stand and action in the matter.

The first edition of THE CENTRAL SPINE was published in September 1975. In the intervening 15 years we have been on many field trips, we participated in a show at the Valley Bank Center and at Metro Center.

Last year, our largest undertaking to date, the 1987 C.S.S.A. national convention, by any criteria was a tremendous success.

It was a lot of fun to review the old minutes of our meetings and to refresh the memory to record this.

Frank Hennessey



DUDLEYAS by Sol Kleinman

Succulents are interesting and unusual plants to grow in the home. As a group they come from dry regions where there is little rainfall and have become specially adapted to desert or near desert conditions.

One such succulent is of the species Dudleya, which is covered with a powdery coating as a protection against the drying effect of the sun. This covering is easily marked by handling the leaves or careless watering. The plant needs to be watered either by filling a saucer in which the pot stands, or by pouring the water carefully around the edge of the plant so that it does not fall on the leaves. Sunshine is needed to bring out the best coloring.

The Dudleya brittonii is the one I am most familiar with, although there are several others including D. albiflora, D. candida, and D. densiflora.

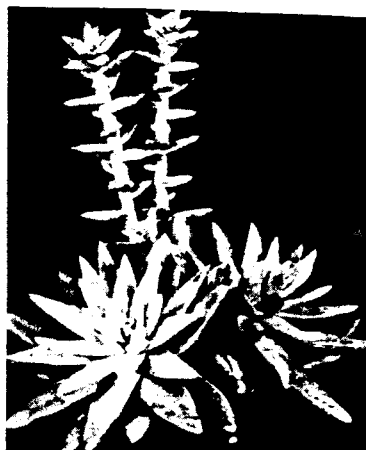
One species protects itself with a repulsive, poisonous juice as the Quinine-Flavored Dudleya.

Nearly all of the Dudleyas come from Mexico where they grow on hillsides, and show up as white patches against the gray-brown rocks. I'll never forget the time Mari and I took a little trip through the Baja peninsula area with some friends. We were cruising along the Mexican Highway when all of a sudden Mari let out a war-whoop! "Stop!" she cried. "Look at that cliff!" What we saw was really impressive. It seemed as though that whole straight up-and-down cliff was covered with something white hanging out from the face of the cliff. Sure enough, as we approached closer there were beautiful Dudleyas. It was quite a sight. Those silvery crown with flower spiraling tops were a sight truly to behold.

Naturally we looked around where we could find some ground to climb on.

Most of the rosettes were white with long tapering leaves, and they formed single or clustered rosettes. Some of the plants were pale green and I have since learned that these are called Dudleya ingens. Jacobsen liests a Dudleya traskiae growing off the coast of California in the Santa Barbara Islands.

Dudleya is generally easy to cultivate. Don't forget to take care in watering. Heavy pressure can remove much of the white glaucous covering which makes this plant so appealing.



Dudleya greeni
"White sprite"

LITHOPS

Author unknown.

In light of the fact that many of us have either started to collect lithops, or have expanded our collections, here are some cultural tips and background information.

Lithops are one of the better known and some of the most prized of the large group of plants that we call "mesembs" for short....Mesembryanthema..... Greek for "midday flower."

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but "lithoparians" agree that these plants do not really look like plants but have fascinating markings and form.

The word "lithops" is from the Greek "lithos" meaning stone, and "ops" meaning face or appearance. Thus we have one of their common names, "stone face." And they do indeed resemble stones, especially in their natural habitat, where they are usually found among gravelly rocks, drawn down into the soil so that only the top is exposed. This provides the perfect camouflage for this most interesting "mimcry" plant. Upon close observation one discovers that there are endless variations in the unusual markings, and the subtle colors add to the beauty.

Lithops are dormant in summer, so after a period of regular watering in the spring and early summer, water should be withheld except for a very light watering or misting IF they become somewhat shriveled.

Watering should be resumed, starting with a couple of light waterings in September, with regular watering beginning in October. (In our hot dry greenhouses, "regular" watering is about once a week. Plants in the house on a sunny windowsill might need less, especially if they are in plastic pots. Your particular conditions, such as the size of the pot, kind of pot, amount of air movement, etc., must be considered adjusting your own watering schedule.) The fall watering period is the time when your plants should be blooming.

During the month of December, start tapering off on the water, then watering should be completely withheld during the months of January, February and March. During these months the new set of leaves inside the plant will be absorbing the moisture from the old leaves, and the outer leaves will shrivel and pull away, revealing new more colorful leaves. When this process of absorption is complete, spring and early summer waterin is begun, as the new leaves fill out completely and the last vestiges of the old leaves dry out completely.

Over-watered plants may continue to live, but they will not have the proper growth form and will probably be weakened plants.

Here is a simplified re-cap of the watering schedule:

- APRIL THRU MAY: FULL WATERING
- JUNE THRU AUGUST: TAPER OFF TO NO WATER, EXCEPT FOR OCCASIONAL MISTING IF NEEDED.
- SEPTEMBER: GRADUALLY RESUME WATERING
- OCTOBER & NOVEMBER: FULL WATERING
- DECEMBER: SLACK OFF ~~ON~~ THE WATERING
- JANUARY, FEBRUARY & MARCH: NO WATER.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS: Lithops should do well in your usual cactus mix if it is somewhat gritty. You should add some coarse sand to it if it is a rather rich mix. Commercial potting soil and gritty sand in equal parts makes an adequate mixture.

LIGHT REQUIREMENTS: Lithops grow naturally in the hot sunny parts of Southern Africa. They are sun lovers. a greenhouse, a very sunny windowsill, or under a grow-light are the best spots for them.

FERTILIZER: Not generally needed, but if you must, use a very weak solution. Bigger is usually not better in the world of lithops.



REMOVING GRAFFITI FROM ROCK

The El Paso Cactus and Rock Club continues its project of removing graffiti painted on rocks in scenic areas of the Franklin Mountains.

We have found propane torches more effective than solvents in removing paint from these rough surfaces. To be effective the temperature at the point of the flame needs to be approximately 3000 degrees Fahrenheit, which is well above the temperature of the home torch for sweating solder.

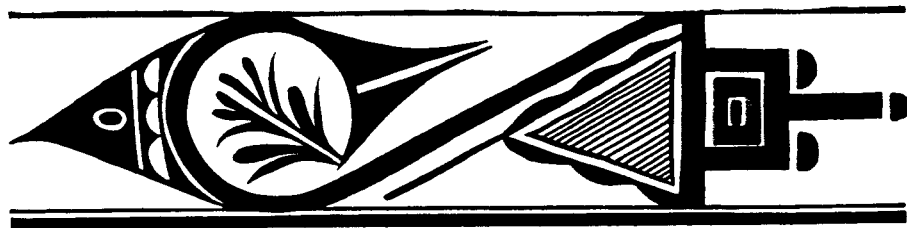
This intense heat often causes the surface of the rock to pop off in thin flakes, carrying the paint away. For this reason safety goggles and old clothing is recommended.

The flaking does not disfigure the rock in an unacceptable way. Oxidation, sun, rain, and the natural growth of lichens soon make these areas barely discernible.

On types of rock on which this flaking does not occur, the torch method is still effective. The extreme heat alters the composition of the paint to such an extent that natural weathering of the paint is accelerated, so non-flaking rock should not cause discouragement.

It is imperative to remember that this method of painted rock graffiti removal is unusable where the surface of the rock needs to be preserved, as in the case of a man-made marker or an Indian Rock Art site.

--From C.S.S.A. NEWSLETTER, VOL XX1, NO. 4, 1985.



BARTRAM'S BOTANICAL GARDEN

The first record of an attempt to grow cactus under glass took place at Bartrams' Botanical Garden in Philadelphia in the middle 1800's

The middle of the Nineteen Century was a time of Western exploration and expansion.

Collectors, botanists, ornithologists, geologists, zoologists----Emory with the Army of the West, Wislizenus in Texas, Bendire in Southern Arizona, Coulter in the Colorado Desert----accompanied survey parties working along the Mexican border and sent their incredible finds back to Missouri to Dr. Engelmann, East to Asa Gray at Harvard, John Torrey in New York.

Knowledge of the genera of the continent grew by leaps and bounds as the desert areas were explored and specimens ^{were} examined and shared for the first time.

John Bartram who claimed before he died just prior to the Revolutionary War that he had a pretty general knowledge of "every tree and plant on our continent" never dreamed of the desert plants to the west nor could he have imagined what experiments and introductions would be taking place in his botanical garden fifty years after his death.

John Bartram is considered the "father of American botany" the "first botanist of the New Hemisphere." His era was a glorious time for botany. The intellectual climate was stimulating and creative. The Science was young. All America was virgin wide open wilderness. Every new species collected and identified was cause for exultation. Knowledge was something to be shared for the enrichment of the world.

John Bartram was basically a farmer, and so he remained, as did all Colonial men. As a farmer he was a man ahead of his time, flooding his fields with liquid compost developed behind a stone dam he built for the purpose. He was also a stone mason, splitting rocks as long as seventeen feet, and with his own hands building a massively solid house, adding to it as his children were born.

Most of all Bartram was a botanist, and confided that from the time he was ten years old he had been strangely drawn to plants. In his twenties he seriously applied himself to the study of medicinal herbs and gained something of a reputation for his knowledge. As he grew older the study of plants became such an obsession he occasionally neglected the farm, hiring someone to take his place, a practice his wife took a very dim view of, and with good reason, for she already had a houseful of children and more on the way. The clutch would be eleven before they were through.

Realizing his couldn't meet the needs of the farm and the demands of his constantly growing family and continue the personal luxury of his botanical trips, Bartram set aside five acres of his farm, and on it attempted to plant every species possible, in formal gardens, or among weeds and rocks, as nearly as he could duplicate their native habitat.

This project became the Bartram Gardens. Many plants now common in American and English gardens were first grown in his garden.

Vera Gamet.

