F.b. 1988

TUCSON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY
FEBRUARY 1988 MEETING SUNDAY FEB. 14, 2:00 P.M TUCSON BOTANICAL GARDENS, EDUCATIONAL BUILDING 2150 NORTH ALVERNON WAY

PROGRAM: Dr. Carol Crosswhite, Boyce Thompson Arboretum, on "Cacti and succulents that can take the cold in Tucson"

MINI-SHOW: Mammillaria, with same rules as last time ... no more than 3 total entries per person, all of different species, all plants potted, decision of judges final. There will be prizes for the top 3 entries.

DUES: If you still haven't paid dues for 1988, please get them to Larry Romo, 5400 W. Nebraska, Tucson 85746. $10 single, 15 family. We need to get an updated list to get out a new roster.

SHOW AND SALE: Arrangements aren't final but April 1 and 2 look like firm dates. It's not too late to pot up a few for the sales tables and spruce up an entry for the show. The January 17 pot party was a huge success. Fifteen busy members potted up 30 flats in record time. Thanks to all.

CACTUS CAPITAL CHATTER: Mary Church has assembled sets of this worthy publication of the club from 1965 to 1978. These will be available for distribution at the February meeting. Many interesting articles and a lot of club history. Sets are nearly complete. A few pages of xeroxing and you'd have it complete.

FREE PLANT: This month's free plant is Thelocactus hexaedrophorus, which is hardy in Tucson. Helia Bravo's Cactaceas de Mexico says it grows up to 6" in diameter in habitat, Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosi, has flowers 2" long and long spines, the central one about 1" long, on prominent tubercles (which spiral). Gray-green plant with white blossoms.

John Gaston

Minutes of January 10, 1988 meeting

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM by John Gaston, president.

Minutes of the secretary and the treasurer were accepted as read. New officers were recognized by the president. Attention was called to the potting party planned for January 17 and the need to prepare for the Spring show and sale. April 1 and 2 would be the dates if we follow the tradition of Good Friday and the following day. Rodney Engard urged that a decision be reached about location for the Society library.

In new business, the president appointed an auditing committee of Jeff Trevas (chair), J. R. Trevas, and a third person to be drafted. He also appointed J. R. Trevas as membership chair, with responsibility for getting out a new roster.

MINI-SHOW Echinocereus

First place: E. pectinatus Judi Gaston
Second : E. pulchellus var. pulchellus Miles Anderson
Third : E. gillottii John Gaston

PROGRAM 6 members present their favorite plants:

John Gaston Mammillaria
Advantages: (1) Many species, about 500. (2) Flower easily, some in winter some in summer. (3) Grow fast, 1-2 years from seed to flower in many, in a 2" pot. (4) Neat, no gaudy flower stems, don't fall over side of pot, drop leaves, geometric and don't hide underground. Many have colorful fruit.
Disadvantages: (1) Many of individual flowers small. (2) Fast growth causes repotting problem (with exceptions). Young ones need repot every year, even large ones every 2-3 years because of breakdown of potting mix. (3) Classification confused, with Pilbeam, Backeburg and others involved. Even definition of genus a problem.
Culture: Any well-drained mix. Alan Blackburn has even grown them in pea gravel. All are shallow-rooted so shallow pots (bulb pots) desirable. Clumping species do especially well in very shallow clay pots. (Dan Birt suggests enlarging hole if it is too small and/or placing a layer of charcoal on bottom.) Don't disturb roots on repotting, other than perhaps breaking into crust around outside of root ball. Fertilize spring and fall, 20/20/20, 10/50/5, 15/30/15 used, whatever is available. Grows them moderately hard.

Judi Gaston Haworthia
Advantages: (1) They are small. (2) Can take low light under John's benches of mams. (3) Show great variety.
Disadvantages: Can't think of any. Some, such as maughanii are slow.
Culture: Important to use a lot of coarse material: pumice, decayed granite, perlite. Water (in unheated greenhouse): take more water than cacti usually do but backs off in winter and summer (but some water from mams upstairs). Do well on east and north windowsills. Propagation by leaf cuttings (seeds rarely available and likely not to be true because they are self-sterile).

Miles Anderson Turbinicarpus
Advantages: (1) A small genus, only about 10 species, some of them very rare. (2) Flower at a very small size and grow slowly,but get flowers all year from different species (3) No worry about repotting, as they don't have much of a root system. (4) No hooks or ferocious spines, good petting cacti.
Disadvantages: None, except that they are listed as endangered and propagated plants are hard to come by and expensive. Limits of genus subject to continuing reinterpretation.
Culture: Use a small pot with a large drain hole and a very loose soil mix. Uses 2 sand, 2 peat moss, some perlite; the whole mix cut 50:50 with pumice. 1/4 strength fertilizer each watering during growing season. Repot only if necessary, as they take a long time to get started again. Has 3 species outside in full cold and full sun.

Myrtle Ethington *Echeveria*
Advantages: (1) Great diversity. (2) Colorful leaves, especially when grown with enough sun and exposed to cold of winter. (3) No spines. (4) New forms being produced by hybridization, including with other genera, such as *Pachyphytum*, *Graptopetalum*, *Sedum*.
Disadvantages: (1) Birds may eat them. Cardinals and thrashers mentioned as bad actors.
Culture: Do best outside, in very loose soil. Uses potting mix and sand, feeds them lightly. Take more water in summer than most succulents. Need partial shade, and to be kept cool in summer. Get hit by very cold weather, so get covered.

Donna Ellis *Lithops*
Advantages: (1) Almost any color available. (2) No spines. (3) Names stable. Desmond Cole has worked on them since WW-II; the late Ed Storms built a collection from Cole plants and seeds, and this collection is now in Tucson.
Disadvantages: Almost impossible to identify a plant that has lost its label, even with a good source.
Culture: Likes large, flat containers. Uses 2/3 sand, 1/3 of a sandy potting mix that Bob Ellis uses. Can take full sun. Roots small and dry quickly, so cut off all roots and let dry if plant received bare-rooted; then put in dry sand and give a little water after a couple of weeks. Waters all summer and stops in winter. Plants squirt seeds out when seedpod wet. Keep soil moist and the seeds will sprout.

Dan Birt Specimen *Cereus* plants
Several columnar *Cereus* species that are usually seen small can make spectacular plants in Tucson if they are treated more like shrubs than cacti. Has seen several very large ones, most recently a *C. dayami* with many arms and the clump 6 ft. across and taller than Dan; this plant was growing between trailers in a court laid out on old cotton land. Water from both trailers got to it. Dan had a large cutting of it with a starting of fasciation. Suggests starting with the famous $100 hole for the $3 plant, 4x4x4, putting a bushel of horse manure on the bottom, under the root zone, and pretending the cactus is a grapefruit. Others called attention to large cacti grown in pretty wet places elsewhere in the US.

The meeting adjourned fairly promptly at 4:00.

Floyd Werner, Secy.

Floyd Werner