



*Gates Cactus
and
Succulent Society*

DECEMBER 2007

NEXT MEETING: " WEDNESDAY " DECEMBER 5th

AT THE SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM

I- 10 AT CALIFORNIA STREET IN REDLANDS, CA.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WOW! Our auction was the best! Over \$1,800 raised. Thanks to all who participated. There were some wonderful plants acquired at that function.

Next is the Christmas Pot Luck Dinner. I hope everyone's calendar is marked for December 5. Dan Griffith and I are bringing turkeys. Bring your favorite side dish or dessert and join in the evening of fun. Just remember that we need to start early for this one. Please be there, ready to eat by 6:30 so we can get all of the fun filled events in. Take a look at the write up for details, see you there.

The CSSA has announced a new program whereby they will underwrite student membership in the society. I am a great believer of finding interested young people and getting them really involved in the hobby early in life.

The situation is that CSSA will waive \$25 of the normal \$45 annual membership fee for students. I believe that we, Gates C&SS, should find interested young people and underwrite the balance. I would like to head a committee that would determine how the club would go about finding kids and how we could invite their participation. Please let me know if you are interested in getting involved.

Please note the article from Harvey Welton (Mexican Hat) in this issue. Harvey has committed to producing a regular series of articles for the cactus world in general and Gates in particular to try to impart some of the great knowledge that he has learned in his more than 40 years of growing cacti and succulents commercially. I have been pushing him to do this and here is the first of many installments.

There was one nomination for the Hazel and Davis Newman Award.

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Just for everyone's information, we have set June 14, 2008 as the date for next year's Green Faire.

This is my last "President's Message". I must say that it has been my great pleasure to serve the club and to see the wonderful gains we've made in the last 6 years. It's time for new voices to be heard, but count on me to be there with a comment or two.
Buck

MINI-SHOW AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED IN DECEMBER

At our December Christmas party the 10 persons with the highest point totals for the 2007 Mini-Shows will receive beautiful pots handcrafted **by Joe Wujcik**. Last year it was more fun and more of a surprise to announce the 10 winners at our Christmas party rather than publish the winners in this Open Gates. This year we will do the same! The results will then be printed in the January 2008 Open Gates Newsletter.
Dennis Kucera

Yr 2008 DUES ARE DUE, and will be accepted by our **Membership Person, Joe C.** Dues are **\$12.00, individual or family**. You **must** renew by 3/15/08 for continued membership and to be included on the **Yr 2008 Membership List**. *Yes, there will be one this year.*

The December meeting is busy, but if you wish to renew your membership during this meeting, fill out the renewal form and give **Joe C.** a check, No Cash!

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**FRIENDSHIP
IS A GROWING THING
THAT BLOSSOMS EVERYWHERE**

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

To all we send our best wishes.

- 12/02 Paula Miller (??)
- 12/04 Marie Hibblings (87)
- 12/07 Barbara Lauck (65)
- 12/14 Tony Jones (63)
- 12/14 Clara Jones (63)
- 12/16 Gayle Lease (60)
- 12/19 Jacque Johnson (??)
- 12/21 Helen Teunissen (82)
- 12/25 Christmas
- 12/26 Dennis Bauers (55)
- 12/28 Dana Klatt (65)
- 12/29 Kathy Conway (56)
- 12/30 Stuart Lease (61)

CCCCC

We offer special good wishes to those having birthdays in December; they usually get short changed, being in the shadow of the Great Christmas Birthday.

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DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 12/09 Eleanor & Don Grecian (59)
- 12/21 Dana Klatt & David (12)
- 12/31 Barbara & Karl Lauck (28)

Have a Great Celebration mixed in with all the other holiday activity!!

And remember:

**A Love Shared
Is A Love Doubled.**

, f ,

**MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A VERY
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Pretty much the same as last year and hopefully it will be as GOOD as last year.

Thanksgiving and the Black Friday Sales are barely behind us, and like it or not, it's time to plan for our Christmas Meeting. Because it is on the first Wednesday It is almost as late as it can be this year, on the fifth day of December. And now it is HERE.

This is our last get together for the year and usually a most joyous occasion. We will enjoy a terrific pot luck, finish up the remaining Society business matters and celebrate the achievements of Society Members. We will be entertained and receive a present. Hopefully the peace and serenity of the Christmas season will be with us to calm our concerns related to war,terrorism and unrest. Maybe, just maybe, some of this seasons peace, love, tranquility and harmony will rub off on the troubled spots around our world.

You newer members, read on. The old timers can zip ahead of the following items!

Here are the Xmas Party details.

The Gates C&SS had a wonderful year and we will have a Great Big Party to close it out. December is here and our meeting time *is* near. We're going to have good food, good entertainment and good visiting to make for an enjoyable evening. With the Gates Society, we get to celebrate the earliest holiday party of the Christmas season, and it is less than a week away!. The potluck runs pretty much like the BBQ, that is, you bring a food dish, hot or cold, **AND/OR** a dessert dish. **The Society will provide sliced turkey**, with gravy and dressing and a **baked ham**, prepared by our members. We'll cover and Thank the preparers in the January Open Gates, and honor them at the meeting next month.

In addition to those meat dishes prepared by volunteer members who have done a great job of

it in the past, We will have rolls and butter, and a large bowl of "smashed potatoes" (I love to say that!). The Society will provide the drinks (hot coffee, hot tea plus a cold punch) and all the necessary plates and silverware, plastic, of course!. The great food we receive at the buffet line is not finger food. *You can be assured that the food and dessert will be fiesta quality and will be in great abundance.* You don't want to miss the December 5th Meeting. Start now to think about, "What should I bring? Which favorite dish of mine?" Then make it and bring it! Don't forget to put a serving tool in each dish (tape your name on the bottom of the dish.)

MOST IMPORTANT. This meeting starts **earlier**, plan on being at the Museum by 6:15. That's 6:15 PM walking in the front door with your dishes!! We will then have only 15 minutes to set up and arrange the serving lines. Be prompt and be quick so we can begin **servng at 6:30**. If we start on time, and if the events of the evening proceed in a reasonably timely manner, we be on our way home shortly after 9:00 PM.

The serving tables are always crowded, full of your great food dishes. **Someone**, most likely **Eva Dye and Judy and Janet**, will be there, working on the setup, ask them if you want help, placing your offerings. Above all, **please try to be prompt** to avoid the upheaval necessary if we have to position your late dish on the serving table after our members have formed on both sides of the buffet tables and are filling their plates. **Please??**

NEW MEMBERS. *This is your special invitation--*

new members, we want you to make the extra effort to attend this meeting;

you will enjoy the evening and get to know the other members. Speaking of 'other members', please offer the 'new guys' a special greeting and show our hospitality by inviting them to join us at our tables so they can feel genuinely welcome in our Society and be with friends.



CHRISTMAS PARTY PROGRAM.

The evening will be devoted to eating, drinking, voting, entertainment, and a lot of visiting. It will conclude with a free plant, a "Christmas Present" from your Society. Be sure you get a free ticket for this event. One ticket per member please.

At some point in the middle of the evening, hopefully, about 7:45pm, we will be treated to a great vocal program by the

Patriot High Madrigal Singers.

This wonderful Choral Group will probably invite us to join in on a few Christmas Carols. Better warm up your voice now.

Our President, Buck Hemenway, made the arrangements, and will tell us about the group when he introduces them. We loved Madrigal Singers over the last few years!! We can expect an exciting and entertaining half hour with them and we look forward to their wonderful performance.



ONE FINAL WORD ON THE PARTY.

This is a membership only affair. Membership means dues paid members, (Yr2007), their families, and *their house guests and your SO.*

CACTUS_ETC

Cacti_etc has a home page with several useful articles that were condensed from the discussions here. Also there are instructions on how to search for topics in the archives and how to retrieve files from the archives. (I hope to put all of the archives on-line eventually, so the search function, which is more than a little hard to use, will become obsolete.)

Cacti_etc home page:
http://www.labs.agilent.com/bot/cactus_home

Please let me know if you have any trouble with items on the web site. It has been some time since it was last "debugged".

Bob Jewett jewett@bill.scs.agilent.com

HAZELLE & DAVIS NEWMAN AWARD.

Each year at the Christmas Party (December Meeting) we vote for a Society member(s) to receive this award of honor. NO nominations will be taken from the floor The nominations have to be written and given to Pres. Buck., or Joe C. The nominations received, are published in this December O/G. and will be read by the President. We'll then vote and announce the winner during the Christmas Party. The Award will be presented during the January 2008 Meeting.



NOMINATION, for 2007— One Received.



I nominate **Bob Laughlin** to receive the Hazel and Davis Newman award for 2007.

Bob is one of the most active members of Gates C&SS. He can always be counted on to bring wonderful specimen plants for the mini shows, and our Annual Show. He is always there helping out and contributing. I was amazed to see him at the Green Faire this year after his terrible car accident. Members like Bob make Gates a better club.
Buck Hemenway

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Janet Burnham joined GCSS in 1985 because she wanted to learn about cactus. Her favorite succulents are epiphyllums. She is a reading paraprofessional at the college level and a member of the RSSB Orchid Society.

Michael and Wendy Green joined GCSS in 2003 also to learn more about cactus. Mike's favorite cactus is echinocereus. Mike is a forensic chemist and Wendy is a LVN. Mike belongs to the San Gabriel Cactus Society, Cactus and Succulent Society of America, American Chemical Society, International Ammunition Association, California Cartridge Collectors Association, and the Corona Sportsmen Club.

THE NEWMAN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD.

Previous Recipients: (* deceased)

- 1976 COL. J. W. DENNISON*
- 1977 DAVIS NEWMAN*
- 1978 HELEN HERMAN*
- 1979 JOYCE TATE*
- 1980 MARIAN BELL
- 1981 GONAH SCHRECKENGAST*
- 1982 BRIG. WILL MOLLET*
- 1983 SYLVIA GOULD*
- 1984 MEL PARKS
- 1985 JOE CASEY
- 1986 LEO & LILLIAN PICKOFF
- 1987 ELEANORE POUNDS*
- 1988 EDITH CRINKLAW*
- 1989 JOE CASEY
- 1990 DAGMAR HERT*
- 1991 DORIS LUTZ*
- 1992 PEGGY PARKS
- 1993 JOE GARDNER*
- 1994 DIANE PARK
- 1995 HOWARD CRAIG
- 1996 RIC & MARILYN NEWCOMER
- 1997 HELEN HUGHES
- 1998 AMBER JONES
- 1999 KIMBERLY & BARRY URMAN
- 2000 JANET BURNHAM & JUDY HORNE
- 2001 DENNIS KUCERA
- 2002 LOIS UTTER*
- 2003 HELEN & BERNIE TEUNISSEN
- 2004 BUCK HEMENWAY
- 2005 EVA DYE
- 2006 CHRIS & KAREN ROHOLT

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### IMPORTANT! ELECTION of OFFICERS 2008

There were no nominations from the floor at the November meeting. The Slate of Officers for 2008/2009 as proposed by the Board of Directors was elected by the Membership.

- President: Mike Green
- Vice President: Tony Marino
- Secretary: Ina Schweitzer
- Treasurer: Karen Roholt
- Board Member: Joe Casey
- Board Member: Dennis Kucera



## CHANGE IN GATES C&SS BY-LAWS

The Board of Directors has voted to change the bylaws of the society. The purpose is to expand the board and have more input from the members.

The following article is proposed to be added to the by-laws of the Corporation. This amendment will be voted on at the Society's December meeting.

To amend Article III, Board of Directors to read:

***5. The positions of Newsletter Editor and Show and Sale Chair shall be Board level positions. Persons occupying those positions are appointed by the new Board of Directors to serve two-year terms, coinciding with the officers terms. The positions will have full Board of Directors rights and obligations.***



## Welcome Our New Members

Ernie & Lucille McGee Nov 2007  
Loma Linda, CA

Lorne Shutt / Nancy Anderson Nov 2007  
Calimesa, CA

Ron & Linda Dortch Nov 2007  
Bryn Mawr, CA



## LOOKING FOR A RECIPE

Claudia Oaks wants the recipe for the cookie made from club crackers with butter and chopped pecans on top. The cookies were brought to the October 07 Meeting. Please pass info to Claudia, 909.882.3033, or Joe. And a belated Happy Birthday (11/05/43) to Claudia who I missed last month.



## CSSA Promotional Article (2007, No. 2)

The major events on the 2007 Calendar for the CSSA are now past, the CSSA biennial convention in Seattle in late May and the annual CSSA Show and Sale at the Huntington Botanical Garden in late June. The convention, though not well attended, was greatly enjoyed by attendees and was clearly a success in many ways. We can't thank the Cascade Society enough for all they did to make the convention successful. The CSSA Show was the most spectacular in many years and the accompanying sale broke all previous records.

However, the CSSA Journal, lavishly illustrated in full color, keeps appearing every other month and according to recent survey results, it is the most valuable asset of membership for most CSSA members. Journal editor Russell Wagner continues to do a superb job with the Journal and I would like to briefly review the contents of Volume 78 (2006) so all you affiliate club members who don't yet belong to CSSA can see what you are missing by not having your own personal copy.

A feature article in the January-February issue is a special conservation report by Jan Emming entitled "The Threat that Invasive Weeds and Wildfires Pose to Our North American Desert Biomes." Part 2 of this series deals with the Saguaro of the Sonoran Desert, the quintessential North American cactus. The same issue also contains two articles on terrestrial bromeliads (a recent interest of mine), Hechtias in Mexico and Dyckias and other genera in Brazil. These plants fit nicely into any succulent collection.

Much of the March-April issue is devoted to John Lavranos and his legacy of botanical discoveries. A wonderful cartoon of John by Gerhard Marx graces the cover. This issue is traditionally eagerly awaited by subscribers, as it contains the ISI plant offerings for the year.

The lead article in the May-June issue discusses the succulent riches of the Ankarana Special Reserves in Madagascar. Irwin Lightstone discusses new technologies for close-up photography of succulents and Brian Kemble shares some stunning photos of *Agave guadalajarana*. The first article in a new series by Elton Roberts entitled "Home Grown: Cactus Tips from a Master Grower" appears in this issue. This well-illustrated series discusses the horticultural requirements of various (mostly cactus) genera, some of which are notoriously difficult to grow successfully in cultivation.

In addition to another article in the "Home Grown" series, the July-August issue features two articles by Root Gorelick on cactus localities in New Mexico, and a description of an extraordinary new species of *Rhytidocaulon* from Somalia whose flowers have strange spider-web-like hairs across the corona.

In the September – October issue we find a delightful South African travelogue by Sue Hakala, winner of a Schwartz travel grant, which allowed her to visit that land of succulent riches for the first time. Another major article in this issue covers the diverse globose cactus community of a site in Argentina's Cordoba Province. The November – December issue is a special issue twice the size of a normal issue devoted to pendent and cliff-dwelling succulents from all over the world, many of which do beautifully in cultivation in hanging baskets.

Features appearing in most issues include the Research and Conservation Report by Donna Woodward, Succulents on Stamps by Peg Spaete, and book reviews by various authors. A number of important succulent publications were reviewed in the Journal in 2006, including *Ferocactus* by John Pilbeam and Derek Bowdery, *Grass Aloes in the South African Veld* by Charles Craib, *Echeveria Cultivars* by Lorraine Schulz and Attila Kapitany, *Stapeliads of Southern Africa and Madagascar* by Peter Bruyns, *Teratopia: the World of Cristate and Variegated Succulents* by Gordon Rowley, and *The New Cactus Lexicon* by David Hunt and others. All of these volumes are valuable additions to anyone's succulent library.

Good growing,

Bob Barth, Publicity Chair, CSSA Board of Directors

## At the JMCC

Last month Buck said "Be advised, that we have an offer to help out at the Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center. It is a real win-win situation for our members and for the Cultural Center. More details are in this Newsletter." And Joe forgot to add the details----- here they are.

## Proposition from the Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center

**Vince Conway**, who is a member and was on the Gates Board of Directors a few years ago and is now the manager of the nursery. By default he is the supervisor most of the grounds at the Center and has more to do than one person with two arms and legs can do.

Vince has offered the following to the club: Gates C&SS members would donate time helping Vince in the Nursery and tending the grounds in the Cactus and Succulent areas. This means everything from pruning, propagating, pulling weeds to naming plants.

For every two-hour volunteer shift (one shift per day max) the volunteer will receive a \$5.00 certificate to be used to purchase plants in the Nursery.

If we can donate 40 hours per month or more to this effort as a group, the Cultural Center will waive all fees for the use of their facilities. (We currently pay between \$450 and \$500 per year).

I know that we have members who would love to get out in the fantastic Cactus & Succulent Gardens at the Center and get their hands full of spines. This is a real opportunity to get truly involved with succulent plants and find out what makes them tick. I can go on and on about my 5 years there, but the short story is that my knowledge of things succulent expanded exponentially because of my exposure there.

We'll talk about this at the next two meetings, but I can say that your Board of Directors has given the authority for the club to commence with this endeavor. Buck

## PEST OF THE MONTH

### New Monthly Feature

Michael J. Green

### Opuntia Pests: a dying memory (hopefully)

In the last Open Gates a “new”, at least to me, pest was supposed to be proposed for this month’s installment. Chelinidea vittiger was suggested as the identity of an insect I found on Ferocactus. Identifying this pest was difficult, researching it was worse due to the scarcity of information. Since the Chelinidea is more typically a pest of Opuntia, I have expanded this month’s “Pest” to include a more generalized “Opuntia Pests: (hopefully) a dying memory”.

Mealybug and scale are known to infest Opuntias. The *Florida Entomologist*, December 2001 issue, contained an article entitled “PRICKLY PEAR CACTI PESTS AND THEIR CONTROL IN MEXICO” which listed 12 species not including mealybug. A Spanish language only Argentinean website listed 6 additional pests:  
. (<http://www.colpos.mx/entomologia/plagas4.htm>)

Internet searches found 3 more, so far. Correlating common names and scientific names with insects is worse than with plants. Several of the published, named species apparently aren’t correct / current under either the common or scientific name.

The infesting army includes:

Metamasius spinolae (Opuntia Borer)  
Cylindrocopturus biradiatus (Spine Borer)  
Chelinidea tabulatus (Gray Chinch Bug)  
Hesperolabops gelastops (Red Chinch Bug)  
Melitara nephelepasa (Zebra Worm)  
Laniifera cyclades (White Grub)  
Diabrotica sp. (Wireworms)  
Phyllophaga sp. (Blind June Beetle)  
Dactylopius indicus (one of the Cochineal Insects aka scale)  
Neohydatothrips opuntie (Opuntia Thrips)  
Moneilema variolaris (Cactus Longhorn Beetle)  
Cryptomphalus asperses (Brown Garden Snail)  
Platynota n sp. (moth)  
Dactylopius opuntiae (scale)  
Hyperaspis trifurcate (ladybird beetle)  
Laetillia species (protozoan larva)  
Bacha species (flies)

All is not eaten, yet. According to the “Mexican” article, these insects seem to prefer just 6 species: Opuntia megacantha, Opuntia tomentosa, Opuntia ficus-indica, Opuntia robusta, Opuntia streptacantha, and Opuntia stenopetala. But that is just prefer; they will probably eat any Opuntia unfortunate enough to be in the dining hall.

In the home of nopales (Mexico), control methods are much different than in California. With California’s protective environmental attitudes, most pesticides see very limited use and then only by “professional” applicators.

Cultural and biological controls are generally always preferred over chemical methods just about everywhere they are practical. Most of the pesticide information contained herein is applicable to Mexico or other non-California areas.

Cultural control measures for the Metamasius spinolae include the extraction of the larvae from the damaged areas of the pads using horticultural knives. Slow-moving adults are hand removed from the surface of the pads from May through September. Chemical insecticides used to control this pest include azinphosmethyl, endosulfan, malathion, and folidol.

Another cultural measure universally available is just disposing of the plant. Biological controls are also used. For the Zebra worm (Melitara (now Olycella) nephelepasa), two parasites are used in the Valley of Mexico. One is a tachinid fly (*Phorocera texana*) that attacks the mature larvae and kills them after they transform to pupae. The other parasitoid is a braconid wasp (*Apanteles mimoristae*) that attacks the younger larvae. Carbaryl (aka Sevin) and endrin are chemical insecticides for the Zebra Worm and are applied during January.

For those that enjoy the cactus jellies, salads, salsas etc. be aware that White Grub (*Laniifera cyclades*) larvae throw their feces out of the openings that they make in the pads. Opuntia growers use these holes and visual traces of feces to find and mechanically destroy the larvae (imagine hand held portable smashers?). The same pesticides used against the opuntia borer (*Metamasius spinolae*) are also used for white grub.

The insecticides carbofuran, chlordane, diazinon, fonofos, heptachlor, and trichlorfon are applied against both the Wireworms (*Diabrotica* sp.) and Blind June Beetle (*Phyllophaga* sp) among others. None are California legal.

In Mexico, the only listed biological controls used for scale is the Chilocorus cacti or Twice Stabbed Ladybug. One of the photos shows a Chilocorus voraciously devouring the available Dactylopius varieties. Mexican growers use malathion, methyl parathion, and trichlorfon to kill scale also. Malathion is still readily available in California (last month’s scale article has more).

According to the article, the other pests listed above are destroyed there with (hopefully, judicious applications of) malathion, ethyl parathion, methyl parathion, heptachlor and endrin. Again, for home use, only malathion is California approved.

Another Opuntia pest is the four species of the “Cactus Coreid”, genus Chelinidea. They seem to like Opuntia where ever and however found. The two most common are the C. vittiger and C. tabulatus. They have also been exported to several countries where Opuntia was considered a weed to act as a biological control, but were considered ineffective at destroying the invasive Opuntias.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation does not list Chelinidea as a pest. Of the pesticides listed earlier, California would only allow malathion. However, other systemics such as imidriclopid should also work.

For all the accompanying photos in rich color go to our web site [www.gatescss.org](http://www.gatescss.org)

A major geopolitical issue is developing wherein the Cactoblastis cactorum moth is destroying ever growing areas of Opuntia. Originally a South American moth, it was exported to Australia in the 1800's, then to the West Indies in 1957 to control / eliminate Opuntia itself. Now it is in Florida and Georgia and working its way west. Mexico is desperately trying to stop it as it encroaches on Opuntias being used as a breeding host for the Cochineal scale (Dactylopius sp.) which produces a multi-million dollar dye component, red carminic acid. For more info, see this site: [http://www.desertmuseum.org/invaders/invaders\\_cactusmoth.htm](http://www.desertmuseum.org/invaders/invaders_cactusmoth.htm)



Research into control methods is being conducted, looking at chemical, biological and sterile insect techniques (SIT).

Control by available insecticides MAY be appropriate in nursery and small landscape settings, but not in widespread landscapes or agriculture. Specific Biological Control agents (predators) have not been identified and study is continuing.



The song is deafening, but the Cacama valvata aka Cactus dodger does little, if any, injury while feeding on plants. Adults can cause injury when they insert eggs into twigs, producing splintering wounds. Cacama's are part of the cicada family.

Another pest for this month was the one found on my Ferocactus in the nymph stage, but was not the initial specie identified. The Narnia snowii, and it's seven genus siblings coachellea, femorata, inornata, marquezii, pallidicornis and wilsoni, typically prefer Platyopuntia and Cylindropuntia species for feasting. Obviously, they are not overly picky eaters. The genus was **Not** named for the magical land in C.S. Lewis' books; the name was published by Stål in 1862 before C.S. Lewis was born.



And then there are the thrips. Several species are cited for cactus: Frankliniella fusca, Heliothrips haemorrhoidalis, Rhopalothrips bicolor, and Scopaeothrips bicolor. Narrow-range oil, azadirachtin, neem oil, pyrethrins combined with piperonyl butoxide and insecticidal soaps, can be temporarily effective for thrips if applied when thrips are present and damage first appears. The most effective insecticides against this pest were found to be spinosad and imidacloprid. Licensed pesticide applicators can use abamectin (Avid) which is derived from beneficial microbes and has low to moderate adverse impact on natural enemies. Biological controls have not been proven yet.

In addition to the insects, there are also virus and disease vectors that are beyond the scope of this article. Following are pictures of a number of the pests with "searchable" names.

## **It Works for Me by Harvey Welton Beginnings**

Welcome to what I believe may be a different view of the cactus and succulent industry. I own and operate, what is, by nursery standards, a very small cactus and succulent nursery in Riverside, California. Our nursery has been involved in the industry for over 40 years and has been a licensed California nursery for nearly that long. The plan and reason for this column is to share information about cactus and succulent culture that has and still does work for me in my nursery. Be aware that what you are reading 'works for me', here, in this nursery, that is located on the western edge of the city of Riverside, California. **What works for me may not work for you!!!** Before I get into the nuts and bolts of what I personally do in the realm of propagation and growing plants here are a few words about how I came about the knowledge I am going to share as well as some random thoughts may be helpful.

First let me assure you that I have never read or known anyone in this business that gave out information that they thought was incorrect or would be detrimental to the reader. There are many books and articles that are excellent sources of information. Find and read them – just be aware of WHERE the person was that wrote the book. For example, if the book was written in England and you follow the advice regarding providing a plant with “the maximum amount of sunlight available”, and live in my area you may cook or at least sunburn a valuable plant.

I suggest that you join one of the many Cactus and Succulent Societies/Clubs that exist across our great land. The members of these associations can provide you with information that will prove helpful in your specific area.

I consider myself very fortunate to have known many of the individuals that are quite possibly responsible for your being able to collect and enjoy these unique and interesting plants. Do the names such as Harold Gates, Harry Johnson, Gil Tegelberg, Slim and Pat Moorten, Frank Fielding, Jim and Elsa Peck and Bob Schick, to name just a few, sound familiar? These persons and many many others, both growers and hobbyists, were and are my friends, mentors, instructors and critics. If I have enjoyed any success as a cactus grower I owe it to these and many others both living and dead.

So let us begin with a very short, true story that over the years has often guided my actions.

The first year that we had a nursery license we joined the California Cactus Growers Association. Meetings were held at the individual nurseries. The particular meeting that I am referring to happened at our nursery was during the winter of 1968-69. At that time we had one 15'x 50' greenhouse (cold frame that was covered with shade cloth and 4 mil plastic to keep the rain off the plants).

After the business meeting and lunch was over Gil Tegelberg asked if he could see the nursery. Of course I proudly took him down to see what I thought was a marvelous growing facility.

He carefully looked over my plants and then asked, “Harvey, what is the most valuable plant that you have?” I considered carefully and then pointed out a gymnocalycium saglione that had set seed for me.

*Gil smiled and then pointed to a dead plant off in one corner of the greenhouse and asked, “What happened to that plant?” I told him that the plastic over the plant had a small hole that allowed the water to drip on the plant and a result of too much water when the plant was dormant caused it to rot and die. Laughingly Gill said “That plant, Harvey, is the most valuable plant in your nursery. The plant died and you know why it died and it probably won't happen again.”*

*Lesson to be learned. If a plant dies and you can determine the cause, the plant's death was not in vain. It served a useful purpose. Observe and learn! Let your plants teach you – they will!*

The Officers and Board Members wish  
you the JOY and HAPPINESS of this  
Christmas Season.  
May it be your best one ever.



Visit our WEB SITE

[www.gatescss.org](http://www.gatescss.org)