

The Bulletin

EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY OF AMERICA



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‘GENE LUND’

‘Ruby Snowflake’ × ‘Tassel’

Hybridizer: Wressey Cooke Reg. #06366

PHOTOGRAPH: Robert Kuettle

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MEETINGS: Begin at 7:30 p.m., on the first Tuesday of each month (except January, December and US national holidays). Admission and parking are free. Refreshments are served. Members and guests attending their first meeting receive a free potted epi. Regular meetings are held in Lecture Hall B, Arboretum of Los Angeles County, 301 North Baldwin Avenue, Arcadia, CA, USA. Take the Foothill Freeway (I-210) to the Baldwin Ave. exit, south. Follow the signs to the Arboretum. The December meeting is the Holiday Banquet. Paid dinner reservations are required.

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From Top:
'Charlemagne', 'Michele My Belle', 'Whipped Cream'
All photos Robert Kuettle

Autumn Culture Calendar

By Mary Beardsley

A Culture Calendar is included with every Bulletin to help new members start their epi collection without having to learn how to care for their epies the "hard" way, i.e. by making mistakes. This material is a reprint from Bulletin: Vol. 59, No.1 (2003), and is the only one, to my knowledge, written by Mary Beardsley. - KCB

FACTORS THAT AFFECT EPIPHYLLUM GROWTH

Beautiful epiphyllum plants are not the result of discovering a magic potting mix or a secret fertilizer formula. Rather, healthy plant development is dependent upon the interrelationship of AIR, LIGHT, WATER, TEMPERATURE, NUTRIENTS, AND POTTING MIX. Undue concentration on or the neglect of any of these factors will be detrimental to your plants. Since the plant environment at each member's home is likely to be very different from that of a person even ten miles away, it is advised that knowing the general principles of good epiphyllum culture is most important.

1. AIR - It is essential for the proper supply of oxygen and carbon dioxide be given the plants. Avoid placing your plants in a dark corner where stagnant air can accumulate. Moreover, air is essential in the root area. The respiration of both the roots and the microorganisms which make nutrients readily available to the roots is critical. You may allow for better air circulation by using a porous mix and by not crowding your plants.

2. LIGHT - Light is a critical factor affecting flower production. Plants in too much shade do not bloom. Move the plants to an area with more light if they are not doing well. In the fall, provide adequate light for your epies, at the same time provide protection from southern sun exposure. The fall season still holds the potential for foliage damage due to too much sun exposure in combination with higher temperatures and low humidity. The use of lath and saran cloth seem to be the most popular methods used to vary the intensity of the sun. As a general rule, give your plants the maximum exposure to the filtered light that they can tolerate without turning yellow or burning with a golden blister. Remember that all epiphyllums cannot stand the same amount of sun. You must watch them carefully! Mark the plants that require less sun. Remember that crowded plants often do not receive enough light because they shade one another.

3. WATER - Epiphyllums grow luxuriantly and flower profusely if they have an adequate supply of water. They should be kept moist at all times. Do not keep them wet. Check your plants weekly for soil moisture. Water absorbed by the roots help cells divide to make new tissue and is necessary for the photosynthesis process.

Water puts the nutrients in solution in order that the roots can take up the nutrients. Frequent light sprinkling should be avoided. Always apply enough water so that it drains through the bottom of the pot. This practice helps leach harmful chemical salts from your mix. If you allow your pots to dry out completely, your potting mix will shrink and the water will run down the insides of the pot without wetting the mix. If this happens, water your pots from below by submerging them in water until all air bubbles disappear. Where autumn rains are prevalent, excessive moisture levels in tandem with high temperatures can rot root systems quickly. Where this problem exists, soil mixtures and container configurations should allow for the quickest drainage possible. This may include adding a greater proportion of larger soil particles (sponge-rock/redwood bark) to your soil formula and drilling additional holes in the bottom and sides of plastic epi pots. Where infrequent or no rain is present, you should water and mist plants on a regular basis. When plants are frequently misted, full-fledged "watering" may be unnecessary.

4. TEMPERATURE - Epiphyllums grow faster at a high temperature; they grow slower at a cooler temperature. For ideal growing, the temperature range should be 50 to 85 degrees. Bacteria that assist in nitrogen production are inactive at extreme temperatures. Avoid fertilizing at temperatures below 40 degrees and above 90 degrees. Heat lamps will provide protection for your plants in below freezing temperatures. Covering plants with plastic (the plastic should not touch the plant) will help keep the frost off. Frost can occur in some areas as early as October. Check weather reports for unseasonably cold conditions. Be prepared! Stock all your winterizing materials in advance!

Depending upon the size of your collection, oil burners, electric heaters, and light bulbs may radiate enough heat to be beneficial. Furthermore, heat radiates from the walls of your house far enough to provide protection for epies placed near the house. In extremely hot weather, the use of water applied directly to the ground can reduce the temperature. If you have a small collection of plants, you may move the entire collection to a cooler area. A cooling effect will result if there is a way in which you can make the air circulate around the plants.

5. NUTRIENTS - Good fertilizing practices depend on: (a) the level of nutrients in the potting mix; (b) the requirements of the epiphyllum; (c) the season of the year. It is wise to provide for a slow, steady release of nutrients in your soil mix. Nitrogen supply is the most critical factor, as it can be depleted easily. Some important organic sources of nitrogen are: hoof and horn, cottonseed meal, castor bean meal, blood meal, fish meal, and urea.

Phosphorus is usually supplied by super phosphate. Bone meal is another valuable organic fertilizer rich in phosphates which are released very slowly for the benefit of the plants. Steamed bone meal has been found to be more effective. Usually there is no deficiency of trace nutrients if we have an ample supply of organic matter in the mix. Epiphyllums planted in a new fortified mix need not have additional fertilizer for a year, or, as long as

healthy growth is discernible. Subsequent regular feedings, with a low nitrogen, complete acid type fertilizer, will keep your plants in optimum growing condition. It is well to fertilize once more before the onset of dormancy. A balanced "slow released" fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or 14-14-14 can be applied as a final feeding before the onset of cool weather. Once winter temperatures arrive, discontinue feeding. This will enable your plants to lapse into a dormant period which is necessary for the following year's production of blossoms. Plants which are too young to flower the following season, may continue to be fed during the "dormancy period" in the mildest climates.

6. POTTING MIX - Your potting mix serves three main functions: (a) it provides mechanical support; (b) it serves as a reservoir for the supply of fertilizer; (c) it stores moisture. The best potting mix for epiphyllums should contain organic matter and should have a slight acid pH. It must be porous. The addition of organic materials stimulates the growth of microorganisms and acts as a soil conditioner. Moreover, such materials can affect the pH and nitrogen level of your mix. The most common organic materials in use are: peat moss, leaf mold, compost, commercial planting mixes, wood shavings, and redwood bark. The porosity of your mix can be improved by the addition of sponge rock, fir bark, charcoal, or pumice. An acid pH can be assured by adding sulfur, peat moss, redwood shavings, or by using an acid fertilizer. Test your mix for pH. The range from 5.5 to 6.5 is the best range. Take Heed! Your epiphyllums will thrive in a well-drained, and slightly acid soil.

ADDITIONAL TIPS DURING THE AUTUMN MONTHS

1. GROOMING - By the end of summer, your plants will have decided which branches to retain for the following year and which to discard! Remove branches that appear to be dehydrated and turning yellow in comparison to the greener and more fully hydrated ones. Breaking or "snapping" of unwanted growth eliminates the necessity for sterilization of your cutters between plants to avoid the spread of virus. And, if one needs to use cutters, remember that the cutters should be dipped in rubbing alcohol or heated with a butane torch!

Diligent removal of weeds while still seedlings will eliminate more drastic measures after they have taken over the entire pot. Oxalis, one of the most common and tenacious weeds seen in epi pots, has a long tap root that must be removed else regeneration will occur. Effective tools for weeding are large, inexpensive "surgical" tweezers (often found at Swap Meets or Discount Stores) and needle-nose pliers. Wearing latex gloves protects one's hands from the majority of epi spines! Unless one has intentionally pollinated a blossom for hybridization sake, remove all unwanted seed pods as they "sap" strength from the plant.

2. PLANTING AND REPOTTING - Autumn months are still an appropriate time for planting and repotting! Cuttings collected at the monthly epi meetings and cuttings sales are usually sufficiently calloused to be planted immediately; Pot unrooted "raw" cuttings

(with the areoles or notches facing upward) in dry to moderately moist soil no deeper than one and a half to two inches. (An extra large cutting may be set deeper for stability's sake. It will benefit from the use of a stake loosely tied to it). Mist the cuttings for several weeks, attempting to not saturate the soil. As the cuttings take root, they will often produce roots from the areoles above the soil level and at the terminal end. This is an indication that your cutting is rooting beneath the soil! Once roots take hold, the cuttings will begin to dehydrate and may now be watered lightly. In the event that a full-sized plant shows signs of stress during the late summer and early autumn months, it is likely due to the loss of moisture and nutrition just spent producing new growth. This less than desirable appearance will ordinarily improve as the plant regains itself with the advent of fall and winter rains. If, however, you feel the plant is suffering from a waterlogged root system cause by poor drainage or excessive rainfall, remove the plant from the pot and inspect the root system. When a root mass has completely rotted, the best remedy is to remove the roots completely. After allowing the wound to callous, the specimen should be repotted in a new mix more deeply than a plant with an intact root system. This allows adventitious roots to form above the original intersection between the nonexistent roots and growth.

3. PESTS - As the warm days of autumn continue, inspect your collection for insect pests! Scale and mealy bugs are usually the most prevalent pests at this time, especially if your collection does not have good air circulation. Sprayed solutions of Malathion or insecticidal soaps are usually a catchall for most epi pests. Dense infestations of scale often necessitate removing the plant from its pot and doing a complete scrub-down with a toothbrush saturated with one of the insecticides mentioned above! Don't forget to bait for snails and slugs! Meal seems to be more effective than pellet or crumble forms of bait. Lightly misting plants before broadcasting the meal will enable it to temporarily adhere to areas most susceptible; ex. — new growth areas. Though unsightly, the bait will ensure your plant's safety and retain its efficiency until it is rinsed away. Cabbage moth larva can also wreak havoc upon tender growth in a short time. A valuable "home defense" for these pests is a 50/50 percent solution of rubbing alcohol and water sprayed from an atomizer.

4. FLOWERS - Some off-season bloomers can produce flowers during the fall months; however, for the most part the blooming season for epi hybrids has passed. For those who include epiphytic cacti species in their collections, late summer and early autumn is blooming season. True *Epiphyllum* species, *Hylocereus* and *Selenicereus*, are most likely to bloom during this period; that is, if the growing conditions provided for them are ideal. As a general rule, species are fairly adaptable and many will grow in the same conditions as epi hybrids. Blooming some of these less frequently seen plants is often difficult unless their indigenous growing conditions are accurately replicated. The epiphytic cacti species are often cultivated by collectors solely for their growth alone, rather than grown for their blooms.

5. FRUIT - Protect the fruit you've intentionally set, and, discard the unwanted "self crosses". With some degree of skill and a little luck, the seed pod you have created should be enlarging and beginning to ripen. Epi fruit usually ripens during the autumn and early winter months; however, some can remain unripe until the following spring. The end of the fruit may still have the spent (now dry) flower attached. Check the label made by marking on the branch with an indelible felt pen and copy the information onto the seed pod itself. Therefore, the information will remain intact even though the fruit may accidentally fall from the plant. The fruit will "give" to a gentle squeeze and have a tropical or mildly licorice fragrance when ripe. Seeds germinate best when they have fully matured in a completely "branch-ripened" seed pod. Do not harvest the fruit prematurely! Unintentional seed pods that have not been removed earlier in the season may be left to mature if the plant is healthy enough to sustain them. They, along with *Hylocereus* hybrid fruit, are the vanguard of "exotic fruit" growing and are edible; however, some are more pleasantly flavorful than others. The pods are high in pectin, making them desirable for jams and jellies. Don Burnett's article, "Growing Epiphyllums from Seed", describes how to remove the seeds from the seed pods and prepare them for germination in Bulletin: Vol. 58, No. 3 (Spring 2003).

Disclaimer: The "Culture Calendar" article printed above was written by Mary L. Beardsley from information gleaned from two master epiphyllum growers - Galen Pittman and Edmund Beardsley, former Co-Curators of The Pentico Collection of the Los Angeles County Arboretum. The suggestions and recommendations set forth are subjective opinions and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ESA Board or Editorial Staff. Comments and/or corrections to the "Culture Calendar" are not only welcome; they are necessary to keep everyone informed of the myriad of techniques and environs that host epiphyllum plants.

Communication and sharing of Information is our goal!

HAPPY GROWING!

Highlights of Recent Meetings

By Keith Ballard

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEPTEMBER 2018 MEETING: This meeting was the ESA's traditional yearly potluck dinner and garden silent auction. Donated epi cuttings and other plants and garden-related items are offered here, and cash or ESA Epi Bucks are accepted as payment.

As with any traditional potluck, the food was provided by members, and included a variety of main dish entries such as beef and chicken, salads, and lots of different desserts, all of which were very



Jeff Bates, Jim Nones and Ken Hanke at the table.

good. There was also water and punch.

The dinner was actually concurrent with the auction as the attendees ate, bid, and rebid as necessary on their selection(s). The auction included epi cuttings provided by attending hybridizers, plus a few other epi cuttings and plants, some small cactus varieties, some orchid magazines and some small plumeria plants plus a couple of 4 or 5 foot plumeria trees.



Some of the rooted offerings.

The maximum price for any auction item was \$50. The second highest amount was \$46.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OCTOBER 2018 MEETING: At this meeting we were honored by a presentation by Edgar Valdivia on "Pitahaya or Dragon Fruit". Edgar is probably the leading person in this country responsible for bringing this little-known fruit from obscurity to being a legitimate fruit sold in stores.

Most of Edgar's presentation was on video. He told us how he got into raising dragon fruit. He had retired from the computer industry and felt that he needed to do something with his spare time. But the activity had to be enjoyable to do, useful, cheap, beautiful and involve no chemicals. He settled on raising pitahaya.



Edgar Valdivia with flowers and a fruit.

Pitaya, or pitahaya, is the fruit of several different cactus species indigenous to the Americas. "Pitaya" usually refers to fruit of the genus *Stenocereus*, while "pitahaya" or "dragon fruit" refers to fruit of the genus *Hylocereus*, both in the Cactaceae family. These plants are cultivated in Southeast Asia, Florida, the Caribbean, Australia and throughout tropical and subtropical world regions.

Of course, there were start-up problems. At first, few people knew the process for obtaining the fruit, until Edgar found a friend with the required knowledge. Once Edgar got the process going, it was difficult to get grocers to accept the fruit for sale, and for other hybridizers to raise the fruit.

Flowers open only at night, so the hybridizer's "work day" of pollination runs from 8 pm to 8 am. The temperature in Edgar's yard varies from a low of 26° F in winter to a high of 122° F in summer. Edgar constantly cross-pollinates many of his plants in an effort to improve the fruit. Due to repeated pollination, it can take 10 years to end up with the best fruit. Currently Edgar has 102 different varieties of dragon fruit growing in his yard.

Because of the weight of the fruit, one would expect that the plants would be trellised in some way. Edgar showed us a really unique trellis and I will attempt to describe it. From the side, it looks like a high small cocktail-type table. The central part is a vertical 6 to 8 inch diameter pipe. At the top of the pipe is a round board, with a hole in the center that fits the outside diameter of the pipe. This board is mounted and secured to the top of the pipe, with the top edge of pipe being even with the top of the board. The same is done in reverse to a board on the bottom, where the hole in the bottom board provides drainage.

The bottom board is secured to the ground. The pipe is filled with planting mix and a Pitahaya plant is planted at the top. Edgar showed us the root 'ball' from such a pipe trellis, it was the shape of the pipe: long and skinny. The plant growth hangs down from the top.

Edgar has never accepted any money for his fruit or cuttings and everyone is welcome to come and see his yard. He had brought some cuttings to give away and some dragon fruit for us to sample.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NOVEMBER 2018 MEETING: This meeting included a presentation on "Virus in Epiphyllums". The presentation itself was created by Ulrich Haage and given by Keith Ballard. Ulrich is the owner of Kakteen-Haage Nursery, which is the oldest cactus nursery in the world, being founded in 1685 (333 years ago). It is located in Erfurt, Germany. A picture of Kakteen-Haage Nursery is included in this Bulletin. I personally was shocked at the size; this is a nursery on an industrial scale! See page 12 for an aerial view of the nursery complex, and for a view inside one of the greenhouses.

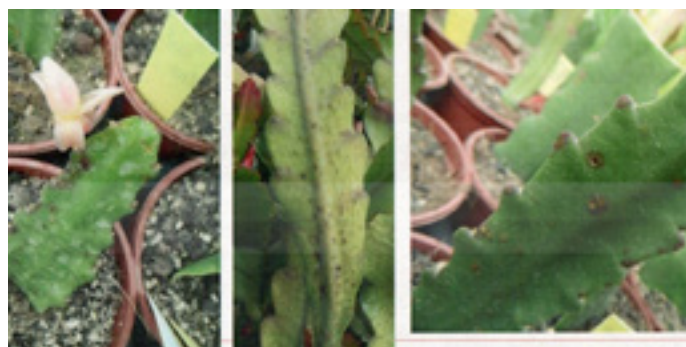
Ulrich was a speaker at this year's EPICON, and at the very end of the conference, he announced that he was participating in a scientific study of virus in epies. What better place for a flower study than Erfurt, which has a number of scientific plant study institutions? The study was headed by Prof. Dr. Annette Hohe, and included a number of horticulture experts. One important question was asked at the beginning of the study: is a flamed flower indication of a virus? This question will be answered later in this report. The research project took three years, with several sub-projects running parallel at different locations.

This presentation then is a report for the scientific study.

All the Kakteen-Haage pictures come directly from the slides of the presentation, but are generally compressed.

The appearance of an epi's branches or flowers often tell the story of the plant's health. The following pictures tell the story, but this story is not a reliable indicator of a virus being present.

Picture below shows epies with a necrosis condition. A necrosis is usually caused by infection, toxins, or trauma which result in the unregulated decomposition of cell components. I have a plant that looks exactly like the middle picture, but its flowers look fine. This year, I cut away 1/2 of the branches and repotted it; we shall see what happens.



Necrosis

Picture below shows epies with a chloroses condition with sunken areas. Chloroses are generally associated with nutritional deficiencies, but they can also have other causes.



Chloroses and Sunken Areas

Picture below shows several epi conditions. The red in the bottom left picture are the veins feeding the growing flower buds, the rest of the plant doesn't look any too good. The bottom left picture is the later state of a new branch. The rightmost picture is of the early state of a healthy new branch. I don't know what is the state the of branch in the leftmost top picture, but it doesn't look good to me.



Reddish Discoloration

The flower pictures in the next column, with their unusual coloration, show a virused condition. The black round face with eyes, is Ulrich's symbol for a virused plant, and he calls such a flower "flamed". The study showed that a flamed flower is a true and reliable indication of a virused plant. Viruses were identified in all epi varieties with flamed flowers.

Some Other Highlights from the Study

Known Facts: Viruses are highly infectious and can be transmitted in various ways. Viruses can spread extremely fast, depending on the virus species: on insects such as aphids, scale insects or mealy bugs; via the sap when grafting or cutting; on cuttings or other plant injuries; even via seeds or pollen.



Virused Epi Flowers

In the study, the largest proportion of viruses found were Carla Virus at 88%. Closterovirus occurred at 5%. Potex virus and Zygocactus virus X (which occurs specifically in one epiphytic cacti) were too rarely identified to be statistically significant. 132 different Epi hybrids were tested in this group.

Virus removal can sometimes be very easy. For some non-epiphytic plants, the viruses accumulate at the bud approach. In that case, it's sufficient to remove the area around the bud and the plant is virus-free. Unfortunately, this method does not work for the viruses in Epi hybrids. However a more complicated method was successful: heat treatment. To do so, plants are gently heated for a long time. Again,

a lot of experience is needed, as the lethal temperature for viruses is just a bit before the plant dies. Unfortunately, epiphytic cacti are no more heat tolerant than most other plants.

After the first plants were virus-free, the search for an effective method of detection began. The commonly used tissue replication did not work well. In the clean room, cells are taken from the apical meristem, i.e. the shoot tip, and placed in a nutrient solution. Perhaps a more to the point statement is: tissue replication failed.

A more successful method was discovered: sterilized and virus-free young shoots were placed in nutrient solution, from which in turn small cuttings were obtained. Up to a size of about 3 centimeters, the plants develop in the nutrient medium before they can get used to soil.

Tips for keeping your plants healthy:

- wash hands before working on plants
- keep your plants healthy and free from pests
- water, fertilize and spray as needed
- disinfect your tool after each cut (*I believe use of a plumbers torch is the most effective way – KCB*)
- avoid grafting of cuttings from different sources on one host epiphytic plant
- remove sick plants from the stock.

Conclusions

- Yes, epi hybrids can be infected with viruses. The flowers may look nice, but the plants suffer from it.
- Viruses can be fought, but the technology is not yet ready for the market, it needs further research.
- What we can do now is phytohygiene (that is, keep the plants clean) which reduces the spread of viruses. Also, remember the tips mentioned in the previous section.]

The ESA's Annual Awards Dinner

By Keith Ballard

The ESA's Annual Awards Dinner was held at Coco's Arcadia on Sunday 12/09/2018. After we had gathered, Cindy Klein (Coco's Banquet Manager) announced that dinner was served. However she also gave us some important information about the future of the restaurant. After 24 years in this location, the property has been sold and will be the location for a new senior center. Coco's lease has three years more to run but Cindy is not going to wait for the new owner to give notice and is going to close the banquet facility at the end of this year. The ESA has had a total of three Annual Dinners in this location. Next year's dinner will be held somewhere else.

The dinner as usual was very good. The main courses were chicken, salmon and prime rib. I had a small piece of all three.



Annual Awards Dinner at Coco's

After dinner, President Kuettle started the Awards Ceremony by reading the following presentation: *"When the recipient of this year's Alice Buchanan Award became a member, it didn't take long before they volunteered to help out at the Pentico Collection. They subsequently volunteered to help set up our Annual Flower Shows and Sales and provide help and advice to the many epi customers. When the ESA took part in The Arboretum's Annual Baldwin Garden Bonanza, they quickly signed up to assist for that whole weekend, which helped the ESA with a very successful fundraiser right on our own backyard. Every time we ask for volunteers, they always come through and answer the call. Whether to help out with setting-up and the sales at the Fullerton Green Scene or the South Coast Spring Garden Show or our Annual Show, they always manage to show up with a 'can do', drama-free attitude."*



Ann Marie Rametta with her Alice Buchanan Award

They are one of a handful members that I can recall who have volunteered to hold the Volunteer Appreciation Day at their home, twice. I would like to proudly acknowledge and recognize the recipient of the 2018 Alice Buchanan Award – an ESA member for over 18 years and a former board member – Ann Marie Rametta.”

The Founders' Award was established in 2005 by the ESA Board in conjunction on the 65th Anniversary Celebration. Awarded annually during the Holiday Party in December, its purpose is to recognize, acknowledge, and honor those who give service and contributions regarding epiphyllums and/or epiphytic cacti, whether as individuals or as organizations. He recognize them for not only for making a difference in the community that they live in, but also their accomplishments reverberate throughout the epiphyllum world, nationally and internationally. Past examples include hybridizers, writers, nurseries, and garden societies.



Rudi Dorsch with EPIG's Founders Award

The last 3 recipients of the ESA Founders' Award were residents of San Diego: Don Patterson, Derek Obayashi, and last year's honoree, Jerry Moreau. This year the award goes across the Atlantic Ocean to a German group called **EPIG**.

EPIG stands for Epiphytic Plant Study Group. It was founded 30 years ago in Germany. There are many members including Rudolf Hessing, Dr. Rudi Dorsch and Dr. Dick Kohlschreiber. This group's mission statement is to foster the understanding, development, preservation and love of epiphytic cacti.

Dr. Rudi Dorsch from Colorado was on hand to share more about EPIG and to accept the 2018 ESA Founders Award on their behalf. Rudi told us a number of facts about EPIG. It is a very active society with about 162 members, including a number of international members. EPIG also produces a journal, with two issues per year.

Then for those who had brought gifts, there was the gift exchange. This concluded the evening's program.

Interessengemeinschaft Epiphytische Kakteen (EPIG) – a 30-year history

by Prof. Dr. Jochen Bockemühl

In 1989, the late Kurt Petersen started editing a newsletter for a group of approximately 30 enthusiasts whom he named "Interessengemeinschaft Epiphytische Kakteen" (EPIG, community of interest in epiphytic cacti). The scope of interest included both the botanical species and the hybrids. These "letters" were initially typed by Kurt Petersen himself until, in 1991, Edi Day took over the function as technical editor and produced the journal, then called EPIG, as a nice brochure. The journal was produced by photocopying and then finished with some original colour prints glued into each issue. This was continued until 2005. Since 2006, the journal has appeared twice a year as a full colour magazine. Chief editor since 1993 has been Jochen Bockemühl, assisted by Ralf Bauer (until 2013), Eckhard Meier and Matthias Appelt as expert advisors, as well as Rudi Dorsch as lector of English language contributions.

In May 1993, our founder Kurt Petersen unexpectedly passed away. An executive board took over including Jochen Bockemühl (head), Edi Day (technical editor), Ralf Bauer (advisor) and Kirsten Pfeiffer (administrator and membership secretary) to ensure the future of our association. In 2014, after 21 years on duty, Jochen Bockemühl handed over the leadership to Tobias Pfeil who is managing the society today assisted by Kirsten Pfeiffer (functions as above).

Our journal EPIG serves as a means of communication with our members. It covers a wide range of topics such as technical articles, reports on habitat studies, presentation of plants, hybridization, recommendations and observations related to the cultivation of epiphytic cacti as well as social and commemorative notes. One third of our 162 members are not from Germany and 20% are not German native speakers; therefore each major article includes an English abstract. An additional, very active communication forum is the Facebook community organized by Tobias Pfeil with more than 400 active followers worldwide (<https://www.facebook.com/epig>). Current information and a picture gallery can be found on our website (<https://www.epig.org>) hosted by Horst Kündiger.

Our main social event is the Annual EPIG Convention which is associated with a general meeting, with lectures and visits to Botanical Gardens, major collections and/or nurseries. At the traditional dinner party plants and cuttings donated by members

and friends of our society are sold by auction for the benefit of the EPIG bank account. The first convention was held in Zurich in 1990 and since then we have had 28 meetings (in Berlin, Bonn, Heidelberg, Zurich and 12 other towns).

Right from the beginning we have enjoyed the friendly appreciation and generous support from our sister society, the Epiphyllum Society of America (ESA), ensured and kept alive by our "ambassador" Rudi Dorsch. We esteem it a great honour that several members of our Society have been granted the distinguished ESA "Founders Award", i.e. Kakteen Haage, Helmut Paetzold, Ralf Bauer, Eckhard Meier, Jochen Bockemühl, Rudolf Heßing-Herick, and Rudi Dorsch. The greatest accolade, however, is that this renowned award has been bestowed, in 2018, on our Society EPIG, acknowledging the commitment and the achievements of our whole community! We gratefully accept this distinction and we hope that our two Societies continue in friendship to shape our common goal, the study and appreciation of epiphytic cacti!

Profile – Ulrich Haage and Kakteen Haage Erfurt, Germany

This reprint from the Bulletin: Vol. 53 No. 4 (June 1998), by Raymond Eden, which documents the 1998 visit and presentation to the ESA by Ulrich Haage and his sister Amrey. It contains some very interesting history of the Kakteen-Haage Cactus Nursery. KCB

We were fortunate to have Ulrich Haage and his sister Amrey of Erfurt, Germany visit our General Meeting on April 7th. Uli's lecture covered the history of Kakteen-Haage, the oldest cactus nursery in Europe, if not the world. Augmented with slides of documents, drawings and photographs, some over 300 years old, he told the story of his family's business from its founding to the present.

The Haage family has been involved in the gardening trade in the Erfurt region since the late 1600s. Shortly after 1800, the local Archduke charged a Haage with the responsibility of getting his prized *Selenicereus grandiflorus* to bloom during the May Festival. The young man succeeded and was well rewarded. He even received a cutting from the precious plant. With this good fortune, Kakteen-Haage was founded in 1822.

The business prospered as the interest in cacti, these strange, spiny plants from across the Atlantic, was on the rise in Germany

(Editor's note: There are no native cactus in the old world). The founder of Kakteen-Haage had three sons who were to share responsibility for the family business. One was educated in business, one in botany, and the third in horticulture. The first crisis the family faced was the loss of the two eldest sons, and the need for the surviving brother to quickly learn botany and business. He met the challenge, and again the business prospered.

During this time, the site of the nursery was gradually taken over by a railway station. Forced to relocate, a site was found outside the medieval wall surrounding the city of Erfurt. The open land was reserved for a battlefield by ancient decree, and anyone building there had to agree to remove whatever structures they built at their own expense if a battle broke out.

A five-year battle did erupt. However it was fought with pen and paper. There was an ancient statute prohibiting buildings outside the city wall from having a furnace. Herr Haage disregarded the law and heated his building to protect the cacti and his employees during the winter. A local magistrate made it his business to force compliance, and a five-year litigation ensued. Literally hundreds of documents were produced as the fight worked its way up the hierarchy, until the Emperor himself was to decide the matter. Ironically, at this time, the city wall was demolished to allow for expansion, rendering the statute meaningless. The Haages were allowed to keep their furnace.

At the turn of the century, another heir apparent died, this time in World War I. Again the duty fell upon a younger son who was not prepared for the job. This was Ulrich's grandfather, Walter Haage. Surviving WWI was difficult due to the lack of coal in winter, but they managed.



Ulrich Haage

In the now infamous rampant inflation in Germany between the two world wars, Walter Haage wisely looked for markets outside Germany, and found success selling cactus seeds in Switzerland.



Inside a Kakteen Haage Greenhouse

In the 1930s, Britton and Rose published their monumental work on the classification of cacti. Their choices of nomenclature did not agree with what was in use at that time in Germany. There was a feeling of antipathy toward the system Britton & Rose proposed. It was at this time Curt Knebel campaigned for the German term "Phyllocactus" for the epi hybrids. Walter Haage took an unpopular stand, adopting Britton & Rose's system for the nursery. No doubt, nomenclature today is compatible between Germany and the West due to Herr Haage's bravery and convictions.

With the rise of the Third Reich, cactus were deemed not "Aryan". No one dared pursue their interest in them, and the business declined. The nursery was compelled to grow produce. Rather than destroy their beloved cacti, the plants were hidden from the inspectors on shelves beneath the benches where flats of vegetables were raised.



Kakteen Haage Cactus Nursery

Near the end of WWII, the nursery was in need of repair, but glass panes were unavailable. Winter was approaching and there was no coal. The Russians occupied the region. As fate would have it, the Russian officer in charge was the curator of St. Petersburg's Arboretum. He placed a substantial cactus order, but wanted to postpone delivery until spring. Walter Haage told him he could not guarantee the order would be filled in spring because the nursery needed major repairs and they had no coal to heat the greenhouses. The very next day truckloads of glass and coal arrived. The nursery and its stock were saved.

The war ended, but the Russians didn't leave. Erfurt found itself behind the Iron Curtain. Kakteen-Haage was expropriated by the communist government. Behind the scenes, Walter Haage was forbidden to control the business. Ironically, cactus experts are hard to find in Germany, and the government found itself in need of Haage help. Ulrich's father was made the head of the nursery, while Walter advised him, "unofficially".

Contrary to the stereotype of what life and commerce were like behind the Iron Curtain, the nursery flourished. Ulrich attributes the interest in cacti to the fact that people were not allowed to travel to exotic places, so they brought bits of it into their world. The government erected six enormous greenhouses at the nursery, each one equal to the entire area that had been under glass before the takeover.

In 1989, the Berlin Wall was brought down. Ulrich's father petitioned the new government for the return of the nursery to the Haage family estate. At first the government asked for \$2,000,000, but after four years of anguished negotiations, the nursery was returned to the Haages free of charge. Lest this sound like a fairy tale, Ulrich said this period was excruciating, and took a serious toll on the physical and emotional well-being of his parents, especially his father. His respect for their sacrifice was self-evident.

In 1992, Princess Grace of Monaco awarded Walter Haage the Golden Cactus award for his outstanding achievements in the promotion, propagation and perpetuation of cacti. It was the highlight of his career. In 1994, the government transferred title to the nursery back to the Haage family. Sadly, Walter Haage had died two months earlier.

At age 29, Ulrich became the sixth generation Haage to assume leadership of the family business, with his parents helping and advising. Near the end of his presentation, Ulrich showed slides of his baby daughter and toddler son, and remarked, "Here is the seventh generation".

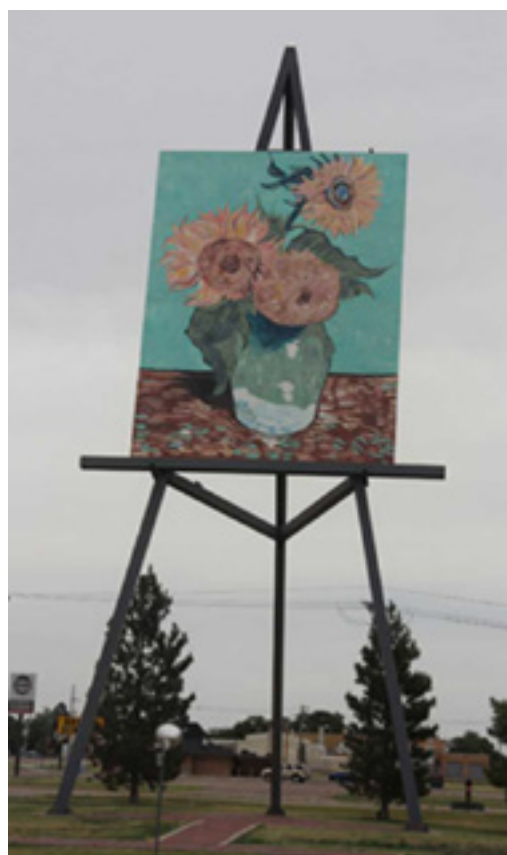
Ulrich and Amrey are the first Haages ever to visit the United States. While here they were given a behind the scenes tour at the Huntington Botanical Garden and Library, and took a road trip to Joshua Tree National monument and on through Arizona and New Mexico. They desired to see something we here take for granted: cactus in the wild.

Encounters with Epiphyllums Away from Home

By Keith Ballard

Pat and I have traveled quite a bit over the years, and we have encountered a number of epiphyllums in our travels in widely different places. Some examples follow:

1.) Goodland, Kansas: In June 2018, we traveled to Wisconsin for a grandson's High School graduation. On the way home, we stopped



80 ft. tall Van Gogh "Sunflowers" in Goodland Kansas

in Goodland, Kansas (population 4,489). This town is the only place in the U.S. that has one of the seven worldwide 80 foot tall reproductions of Vincent van Gogh's painting "Sunflowers", which is sitting on an easel. It can be seen from the I-70, but we wanted to see it up close.

After the viewing, we decided to have lunch in town at the "China Garden". As we walked in, we noticed a

full-grown epiphyllum in the front window. We asked the waitress/manager if her epi had bloomed for her. She answered that she had traveled to the west coast and her sister had given it to her but she didn't know its name. I showed her a picture of an epi bloom on my cell phone and at least she learned the word "epiphyllum".

2.) Jerusalem, Israel: In 1989, we went on a group trip to the Holy Land, which of course included Jerusalem. One of the days we

were in Jerusalem we were walking north inside of the old wall, just north of the Dome of the Rock (aka the Mosque of Omar, which is the structure reporters often use as a background for news stories about Israel). As we approached the Saint Anne Church, we spotted the full-sized epiphyllum in a pot as shown in picture below, by a wall of Saint Anne Church. The location was fairly isolated, but the epi looked healthy, so someone must have been caring for it.

As I remember, we saw several other epies next to buildings in Jerusalem, but I did not take any pictures of them and none were in bloom, as it was not flower season.



Epi in Jerusalem

3.) Ancient Maya Indian Site, Mexico: We have often noted in Bulletin articles that epies are native to Mexico, Central and South America. A few years ago we went with our younger daughter to a Mexican resort. She is a sales team leader for Discovery Toys, and this trip was a reward for her high sales. We went along to babysit her children.

One of the optional tours offered on this trip was to an Ancient Maya Indian Site and we took our daughter and her family on that tour. On the tour we saw the tree with the green epies hanging on it, shown in picture on the following page. In his speech, the tour guide made the statement that "the green hanging plants on the tree are epiphyllums and they eventually will kill the tree". Of course, I spoke up and said "epiphyllums don't kill trees". But the guide was quite insistent, and I decided it wasn't worth arguing, so I didn't say anything more.

4.) Ancient Maya Indian Sites: Mexico, Central America, and South America: Around 12 years ago we made a number of trips to Guatemala and some of the surrounding countries to tour ancient Maya Indian sites. Did we see any epies? You bet! Several of the hotels we stayed at had very healthy-looking potted epies. I would suspect they were species and were white in color, but no one I asked knew. In general, many of the other flower genera were glorious. There were even a number of familiar genera, but with different colors and color patterns from what we see in the



Epi Encounter in Mexico

U.S. Our main interest in all of these Maya trips was, of course, Maya Indian sites, and on sites and between sites we were moving fast so didn't manage to get too many epi pictures.

The picture below shows one of the most spectacular epi displays that we saw. They were on a tree in the open patio of a hotel we visited in order to view their Maya artifacts. I apologize for the poor quality of the black & white picture.

The bulge around the trunk of the tree between the ground and the branches is actually an epiphyllum with a few small branches of something else sticking out. The epi plant (or plants) was the size of a Volkswagen! To give some idea of size, if you look closely, the



Tree in Guatemala Covered with Epies

white square in the lower right corner of the picture, and the black space underneath it down to the gray square, is a doorway.

In fact, we saw two such displays. The other display - perhaps even a little larger - was in front of the Administration Building at Tikal National Park.

5.) Belize: a small and impoverished country located in the lower and eastern part of the Yucatan Peninsula, bordering Guatemala. This country was originally a British territory. We didn't see many epies here, but I did get a wild epi shown below. Notice that the lower branch on the left and the rest of the branch to which the lower branch on the left is connected to are dead.

If you travel and have seen one or more epiphyllums in your travels, we would love to hear about it! Write the story and send it and any pictures to me, Keith Ballard at epinut01@juno.com



Wild Epiphyllum in Belize

Is Leaf Mold Gone Again?

By Keith Ballard

Background: I got a late start on my repotting this year. In July, I got a bag of LGM leaf mold which turned out to be rotting leaves as it should be. I started repotting about 8 plants a week until I used up almost all of the leaf mold. I then discovered that the nursery from which I have been buying supplies didn't have any more leaf mold on hand.

I then wondered if the LGM Company had a relatively nearby on-site store, as it might be a more reliable source of fresh leaf mold. So I found LGM's location from the internet. We drive by it every meeting; it's a mile or so west of the I-605 freeway and about the same distance south of the I-210. In other words it's close to the Arboretum. So, I called them. No, they do not have an on-site store. Then I asked if they knew of any local (to them) nurseries that bought a lot of leaf mold, and the receptionist referred me to the LGM "Leaf Mold Manager". What he told me was really disappointing, and I quote: "We have not had a shipment of leaf mold from our supplier in over 9 months". That was more than 3 months ago, so it's been more than a year by now since LGM had a shipment of leaf mold.

So it's back to finding a substitute for leaf mold.

Leaf Mold Substitutes: The results I have had with the fresh real leaf mold have been fantastic! Many of the current repots are showing new growth. The most outstanding is 'Golden Silence' with 5 new branches, the largest one is 15 inches long, having been repotted on 7/13/18.

In picking a substitute, we need to remember the basics. Epies are acid-loving plants and rotting oak leaves are on the acidic side. Acidic rotting leaves are epies' natural environment, and leaf mold is as close as we can get to epies' natural environment. Not having any leaf mold, we need to try to find what else might work. What follows is a list of possible substitutes. The measures of success for the substitute are some visible plant growth or improved flowering.

Fertilizers: I am trying a EF Stone & Son product called "CARE for azaleas, camellias, rhododendrons & gardenia and all acid-loving plants". The directions say "Scatter evenly under the plant and beyond the drip line to 1/2 the distance from the trunk to the drip line. Do not cultivate it into the soil." The same rules apply to a potted plant.

I bought this fertilizer with the hope that it would cause the planting mix to become sufficiently acidic to improve growing and blooming. However, this fertilizer may be too acid for my epi garden. All my plants in 6 inch and larger pots, are automatically dip watered. The drip stream is about 1/8 inch in diameter, so all the drippers are positioned to drip onto or near the main branch, and its underground roots. The drip stream makes a wet spot on the surface of the mix about 1/2 inch in diameter. Where does the dissolved fertilizer go? It has to be in that 1/2 inch circle. So any dissolved fertilizer goes onto or very near main trunk and its roots. The box warns us there could be root damage from this strong acidic fertilizer. Will the plant thrive or die? We shall see. However, my test plant now has some small new growth, so maybe this is going to work out.

Coir (i.e. coconut fiber): Many growers have used coir for many years as a substitute for leaf mold, but it really is not very effective. Coir is only slightly acidic, maybe not even acidic enough to overcome the fact that Los Angeles' water is somewhat basic (i.e. the pH is higher than 7, which we know from a LADWP Report

published in a previous ESA Bulletin). I for one am not going to use coir anymore.

Cactus Mix as a Substitute: Epies are a cactus so it makes sense to plant them in cactus mix. However, I have no experience with cactus mix. So in order to gain some, I bought a bag of EF Stone & Son cactus mix. Then I planted some epies in a mix of it, along with various combinations of other ingredients I have used before in epi planting mixes. These combinations are listed in the following table:

Mix #	Epi Name	Composition (in parts)
1	'Young Nun'	1 Cactus Mix, 1/2 Bark
2	'Young Nun'	1 LGM Potting Soil, 1 Cactus Mix, 1 Perlite, 1/2 Bark
3	'Flechsigs Flame'	1 LGM Potting Soil, 1 Cactus Mix, 1 Perlite, 1/2 Bark
4	'Kimono'	1 LGM Potting Soil, 1 Cactus Mix, 1 Perlite, 1/2 Bark
5	'Sulfaia Aureclin'	2 Cactus Mix, 1 LGM Potting Soil, 1 Perlite, 1/2 Bark

Note 1: I normally give repots a 4 week recovery time, watering with a B1 solution. Then I plan to add some "CARE" fertilizer (see above) to Test 3 and my regular fertilizer to Test 4.

Note 2. 'Sulfaia Aureclin' is not registered. I got it at last years' silent auction.

Kellogg Garden Shade Mix as a Substitute: Last year I was close to accepting Kellogg Garden Shade Mix as an acceptable substitute. I was testing to see the flower production of a Kellogg epi mix versus an epi mix with coir. We were in the fifth year of drought when it started to rain (The whole story is reported in Bulletin: Vol. 73, No. 1 (Fall 2017)).

Needless to say, with two variables the comparison was blown. The Kellogg and rain mix produced a higher average count of flowers than the core mix, but how much was due to Kellogg and how much to the increased rain?

I plan to rerun this comparison when I find some Kellogg Garden Shade Mix. Sadly, Kellogg Garden Shade Mix is difficult to find.

Assuming I can find some Kellogg, there will be a test as above; that is, (1) with 2 Parts of LGM, 1 part Kellogg (plus the same amounts of Perlite & bark as in the Cactus Mix tests) and (2) with 2 Parts Kellogg and 1 Part LGM (again, with the same amounts for the Perlite & bark).

Alice Buchanan Award History

Shortly before her death in December 1981, Alice Buchanan donated 2,800 rooted epi cuttings to the Epiphyllum Society of America (ESA). Soon thereafter, the ESA Board of Directors established the Alice Buchanan Award in her honor.

This award is given to those who have performed outstanding service to the Epiphyllum Society of America, by contributing to the Society's welfare or advancing its ideals and objectives. The Board did not mandate that the Alice Buchanan Award be given annually, but at the sole discretion of the ESA President.

Any ESA member may nominate someone for this award at any time during the year. Nominations must be in writing and sent to the ESA President. The President can then select a recipient - either from the nominees or someone of her or his own choosing - or decide to not give the award at all that year. In the event that there is no President or Acting President, the Board shall have sole authority for the selection.

There is a tradition of surprising the recipient with the honor at the annual Holiday dinner, which is why nominations are not revealed in advance. In fact, at present, the President is not required to inform even the Board of Directors who has been nominated, nor who has been selected, presumably because the recipient may be a Board Member.

Alice Buchanan Award Recipients

1982 - Ethel and Buddy Hurst
1983 - I.J. and Ethel Hughes
1984 - Velma Featherstone
1985 - Ken Bone
1986 - (not awarded)
1987 - Betty and Bob Berg
1988 - Charles and Eulah Hardy
1989 - R.O. Lassiter
1990 - Noel and Russell Bumdah
1991 - Tina Forgrave
1992 - (not awarded)
1993 - (not awarded)
1994 - Dr. R.W. Kohlschreiber
1995 - (not accepted)
1996 - William Andre
1997 - Edmund Beardsley
1998 - Donald E. Clinton
1999 - Jean Gray and Michele Davis
2000 - Galen Pittman
2001 - Raymond R. Eden Jr.
2002 - Peggy Oberg

2003 - Ed Imlay
2004 - Pat Ballard
2005 - L.A. County Arboretum and Botanic Garden
2006 - June Hughes
2007 - Keith Ballard
2008 - Loretta Garcia
2009 - Gail Grassi
2010 - Jim Nones
2011 - Ken Hanke
2012 - Fred Stegner
2013 - Mary Beardsley
2014 - Robert Kuettle
2015 - Marrie Caldiero
2016 - Geneva Coats
2017 - Kathy Stiebel and Marie Schmidt
2018 - Ann Marie Rametta

Ransomware Warning

By Keith Ballard

"Ransomware" is the name of the process for a computer hacker trying to extort money from computer users. You may have heard recently that this happened to a number of hospitals.

Here is the process: A hacker manages to hack into an initial person's (IP) e-mail software, where he (or she) steals the IP's contact list. He then sends e-mails to the names on the IP's contact list, but with a new and different return e-mail address from the IP's address. If you receive such an e-mail and you click on this new address two things will happen:

1) Your click will open the hacker's dirty work, consisting of a self-installing program that will seek out some critical data -- such as irreplaceable pictures or tax records -- and then encrypt them so you cannot open them.

2) You will be sent an e-mail that informs you that your computer has been encrypted and the hacker wants money, probably in bitcoin, to decrypt the files.

If you send the money, in effect you will be ransoming your encrypted files, thus the name "ransomware".

Recently President Robert Kuettle became the IP in this scenario. To Robert, there was no indication that his e-mail had been hacked, other than people telling him that they received a phony Kuettle e-mail. One of Robert's neighbors fell for this scam, and the hacker wanted \$3900.

So what's the bottom line here? The current safety rule states:

"Don't open any e-mail for which you don't know the sender". This needs a second don't, and this is: "don't open any e-mail unless you are sure the return e-mail address is correct for the known sender".

One other thing: to avoid becoming an IP, the experts recommend changing your e-mail password often.

I have received a second hacked Kuettle e-mail this week. Neither the e-mail address or the content made any sense. This might be yet another flag of a dangerous e-mail.

Editor's note: Don't click on any links in email unless you are absolutely sure the link leads to the correct address. This is doubly important for email from banks and financial institutions. You can hover your mouse over the link to see the actual address; it will display at the bottom of your browser. Please report these kinds of emails to the institution in question; you can find out where and how to report by going to their website and looking for 'phishing', 'abuse', or 'security'.



'Immortal'

Some Photos From The President's Collection - 2018



'Kimono'



Epiphyllum pumillum



'Pete's Surprise'

Calendar of Events

February 2019

ESA BOARD MEETING

Tue, Feb 26, 7:30 pm

March 2019

ESA GENERAL MEETING

Tue, Mar 5, 7:30 pm

Program: Robert Kuettle Hybrids

Location: Arboretum of LA County, Bamboo Room.

ESA BOARD MEETING

Tue, Mar 26, 7:30 pm

April 2019

ESA GENERAL MEETING

Tue, Apr 2, 7:30 pm

Program: Rudolf Hessing "A Program With No Name"

Location: Arboretum of LA County, Bamboo Room.

GREENSCENE @ Fullerton Arboretum

Sat-Sun, Apr 13-14

Location: 1900 Associated Rd. Fullerton, CA 92831.

SPRING GARDEN SHOW @ South Coast Plaza

Thur-Sun, Apr 25-28

Location: 3333 Bristol Street, Costa Mesa, CA, 92626.

ESA BOARD MEETING

Tue, Apr 30, 7:30 pm

May 2018

ESA GENERAL MEETING

Tue, May 7, 7:30 pm

Program: TBD

Location: Arboretum of LA County, Bamboo Room.

SBES ANNUAL SHOW & SALE

Sun, May 5

Location: South Coast Botanic Garden, Frances Young Hall

SDES ANNUAL SHOW & SALE

Sat-Sun, May 11-12, Sat SALE ONLY

Location: Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park

ESA Sale & Show

Sat-Sun, May 18-19, Sat SALE ONLY

Location: Arboretum of LA County, Ayres Hall

ESA BOARD MEETING

Tue, May 28, 7:30 pm

Refreshments Schedule

To find when it is your turn to bring refreshments for an ESA meeting, look for your last name initial in the column to the left. The month of the meeting to the right is when you have the privilege of providing food, serving and cleaning up.

LAST INITIAL..... MEETING MONTH

A-B..... FEBRUARY

C-D..... MARCH

E-G..... APRIL

H-K..... MAY

L-M..... JUNE

N-O..... JULY

P-R..... AUGUST

S-T..... SEPTEMBER

U-Z..... OCTOBER

Potluck..... NOVEMBER