

VOL. 54  
No. 4

JULY-AUGUST 2017

# Kaktos Komments

a bimonthly publication of the Houston Cactus and Succulent Society  
to promote the study of cacti and other succulents



Euphorbia vulcanorum  
by Karla Halpaap-Wood

**From the editor****Karla Halpaap-Wood**

The hot days of summer are here. But that is the time of the year that our plants love. Overwatering does not matter so much when the temperatures are high.

In this issue I start a new article, HCSS members plants and collections. I hope everybody will participate. Send me a short or long article with pictures about your favorite plants, or even most difficult plants. Deadline to submit articles for the KK is the last day of the even months.

**Membership****Kathy Fewox**

Twenty-four members attended the May 24th meeting of HCSS. Joining us were seven guests: Troy and Kim Merchant, Elizabeth Houche, Wei-Chung Su, Teresa Garcia, and Stacy and Ray Ellison (David Thomas's daughter and son-in-law). We gave away two very nice door prizes. Elizabeth Houche went home with a lovely black pot donated by David Thomas. Wally Ward donated a Consolea corallicola cactus, which was taken home by some lucky person whose name I forgot to write down.

Our June 28th meeting was attended by twenty-three members. Also attending were sixteen guests, which is surely some sort of record. Joining us were Kimberly and Troy Merchant, Sharon Juntuneu, Ruthanne Bowser, Jimmy Black, Erin Holder and her mother Lee Holder, Sasha Rios, Joseph Dottino, Elvia Flores, and Teresa Garcia. We also had two guests from Argentina, Mirta Rodriguez Porto and her husband Hugo A. Kees, who attended with Mirta's sister Graciela DiFlavia and her husband Roberto, and Anna DiFlavia. The DiFlavias reside in Spring. Mirta is a cactophile and was thrilled to attend our meeting, although she speaks no English (Graciela translated for her). We only had one door prize at the June meeting, but it was a big one: a huge clump of some sort of Echinopsis in a very nice bonsai-type pot. It formerly belonged to our dear Marie Tuma (who is moving and can't take her plants), and was brought in by Dick and Phyllis McEuen. Many longed to take it home, but it was won by visitor Jimmy Black.

**Calendar:**

<b>July 12</b>	7:30 pm HCSS Board Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center,
<b>July 28</b>	7:30 pm Membership Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray St, Houston, TX 77019 This is our anniversary dinner.
<b>August 23</b>	7:30 pm Membership Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray St, Houston, TX 77019 "Getting Ready for Show" by Stan Russ and Josie Watts
<b>August 30</b>	Deadline to submit articles to Sept/Oct KK
<b>Sept 9-10</b>	Show and Sale at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray St, Houston, TX 77019

HCSS gained three new members at our Spring Sale. Joining us were Cathy (Cat) Garza, and Micah Robbins and his partner Robert Dood. Cat helped out at the Spring Sale and attended the May meeting. Robert attended the May meeting (Micah was unable to attend), and Micah attended the June meeting (when Robert was unable to attend). Please join me in welcoming Cat, Micah and Robert to the club!

Member Kathrin Schaaf gave birth to daughter Emilia Anaïs on May 16, 2017. Emilia's siblings are Felix, Lukas and Linnea, and proud papa is Christian Schaaf. Congratulations to the Schaaf family!



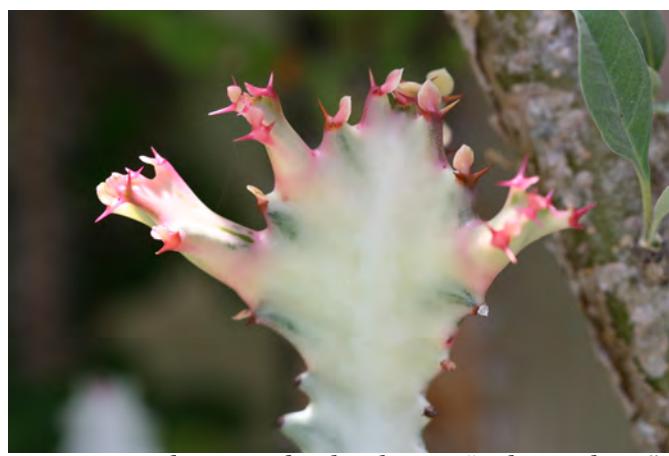
As I mentioned above, long-time member Marie Tuma is moving to Chicago to be close to her family. For years Marie was a constant presence at HCSS meetings. Lately, she had attended whenever she could. Marie's sweet presence will be missed by all her friends at HCSS.

Maria (Keka) Trevino, Liliana Rodriguez Cracraft's mother, continues to be in very poor health and has been hospitalized three times this year. Liliana has been spending a lot of time in Mexico, caring for her. The family would appreciate your thoughts and prayers.

When giving credit for donated food items at our March meeting, I neglected to mention Liliana Cracraft's donation of the chocolate candies wrapped like little presents with plastic succulents serving as bows. They were really adorable, and much appreciated by the meeting attendees. I also forgot to mention Liliana's donation of bluebonnet seed packages at our April meeting. I know many of us, myself included, were thrilled to get the seed packets, and I can't believe I forgot to give Liliana credit, especially in light of the fact there were no other door prizes that month.

Please send news of HCSS members and their families to kathyfewox@aim.com.

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New growth on euphorbia lactea "White Ghost"

## July Cactus of the Month

Kathleen Canty

### Name: *Opuntia galapageia galapageia*

Synonyms: over 16 names. Only 3 varieties are recognized  
*galapageia*, *macrocarpa*, *profusa*.

Common Names: Galapagos Prickly Pear

Habitat/Distribution: widespread throughout the Galapagos Archipelago to 5000 ft. It grows mostly in the dry, arid zone near sea level. Once IUCN redlisted as vulnerable, threats such as feral animals, expanding agriculture and urbanization have been mitigated and the species has made a healthy recovery.

Three varieties of one species are recognized: *galapageia* occurs near sea level on Bartolome, Pinta and San Salvador Islands; *macrocarpa* is found only on Pinzon in shrubby, forested areas above 574 ft; *profusa* tends to be only shrubby and occurs only on Rabida Island at sea level.

**Ecology:** This *Opuntia* forms the principal food article for the Galapagos Land tortoise (*Chelonoidis nigra*). The long necks and limbs enables the tortoise to browse the tall *Opuntia* that grow in arid environments. Tortoises acquire most of their moisture from the dew and sap in vegetation.

**Description:** *Opuntia galapageia* is a variable perennial, sometimes low and creeping, but often becoming large and treelike to 15 ft. It shows great variation in habit, armament of joints and character of spines.

**Trunk:** Spiny, made of flat joints set end to end, with the short axis of each joint at right angles to that of the adjacent joint; becomes thicker than any other known species of the genus.

**Cladodes:** Orbicular, oblong or obovate, fleshy, usually very large spiny, greenish yellow.

**Areoles:** Large, often prominent on trunk, forming knobs bearing numerous spines.

**Glochids:** Few to absent.

**Leaves:** Conical, large, non-persistent, usually not obvious.

**Spines:** Variable, nearly all straw-yellow becoming reddish or brownish white.

**Flowers:** Solitary, diurnal, yellow to orange. Stamens numerous.

**Fruit:** Berry 2-4 cm diameter, fleshy with numerous seeds. Edible.

**Cultivation/Growth:** Tropical summer-growing and easy. Makes great potted specimens. Susceptible to rotting if kept too wet. Porous, slightly acidic potting medium. Add pumice, vulcanite, perlite. Likes full sun or 6 hours of bright light. Very salt resistant and may be grown near the sea. Hardiness: To 53.6 F but can tolerate to 32 F for short periods if kept dry. Propagation: seeds or cuttings.

**Availability:** Hard to find. Received from research biologist who grew from seed.

**Remarks/Comments:** Has beautiful golden yellow spines that glow in sunlight and contrast with the teal bluish pads.

**Bibliography:** Edward Anderson "The Cactus Family" Timber Press, Inc. 2001, The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, Wikipedia.



Uploaded by: Valentino Vallicelli

Photo uploaded by Valentino Vallicelli

## July Succulent of the Month

Ron Chadick

### **Hoya Kerrii (Sweetheart Plant / Valentine Hoya)**

There are a few Hoya's out there which make ideal houseplants, Hoya Kerrii or the Sweetheart Plant is one of them.

The heart shaped leaf can be a novelty gift to give to a plant enthusiast friend, relative or sweetheart.

Hoya kerrii is a species of Hoya native to the south-east of Asia. Its eponymous collector is Arthur Francis George Kerr, British physician and botanist.

As the thick leaves are heart-shaped, the plant is sometimes named "Lucky-heart". In Europe, it is sold for Saint Valentine's Day.

Its origin area is South China, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and the Indonesian island of Java.

#### Description

Hoya kerrii is a climbing plant that can grow up to 4 meters high (around 13 feet). Stems have a diameter of 7 mm. The leaves are 6 cm wide, 5 mm thick. Adult plants show inflorescences of 5 cm diameter and up to 25 flowers. They produce small balls of nectar, coloured red to brown. They smell only faintly or not at all.



#### Taxonomy

A specimen was collected by Arthur Francis George Kerr 1910 in or 1911 in the Doi Suthep mountains west of Chiang Mai (Northern Thailand) at an altitude of 390 m above sea level. It was transplanted to Kew Gardens where it flowered in August 1911, and the species was first described by William Grant Craib from that plant and the wild collections in 1911.

#### Culture as housing plant

Garden centers sell young plants as a unique leaf a little bit thin heart-shaped planted in a pot. It stays unchanged during many months. Then it grows quickly : one meter by year.



#### Varities

Leaves vary from solid green to splash, which is more or less spotted to variegated, with a variety of white inside to white outside to white outline of leaves. Some see white leaves as a negative and remove them and others see them as giving a plant character.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoya\\_kerrii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoya_kerrii)



## August Cactus of the Month

Jeff Boggan

- NAME: **Mammillaria bertholdii**
- HABITAT/DISTRIBUTION: Oaxaca Mexico, near the Pacific coast, growing in a mix of volcanic and sedimentary gravel.
- DESCRIPTION: It is very similar Mammillaria pectinifera except with longer tubercles and its flowers are magenta in color instead of white. In habitat photographs it grows flat to the ground and resembles Ariocarpus kotschoubeyanus. In cultivation as a graft it loses these rugged flattened features and tends to grow more spherical.
- CULTIVATION/GROWTH: It is grown from seed or by grafting. The majority of the specimens on the market are grafts. They are prone to rot on their own roots in humid climates.
- AVAILABILITY: These plants appear to be readily available from numerous nurseries in Europe and Asia.
- REMARKS: This new Mammillaria was found in Oaxaca Mexico by Andreas Berthold near the end of 2013. It was named in 2014 by Thomas Linzen. The information provided in this article comes from the references and links listed below.
- REFERENCES:
  1. XEROPHILIA – Volume VI, No. 1 (20\_, March 2017 | ISSN 2285-3987. Pages 5 – 12
  2. <http://davesgarden.com/guides/pf/go/229200/>
  3. [http://www.llifle.com/Encyclopedia/CACTI/Family/Cactaceae/32468/Mammillaria\\_bertholdii](http://www.llifle.com/Encyclopedia/CACTI/Family/Cactaceae/32468/Mammillaria_bertholdii)
  4. <http://www.cactusexplorers.org.uk/Explorer12/Cactus%>



FROM THE KK ARCHIVES  
Originally published in the KK February 1964, Vol II, No. II

Cactus  
By: P. G. Nichols (Cactus Nick)

Cactus: just what are they, human, or are they not?  
Let's just study them and see what we got.  
There is our friend Willie he is tall and slim,  
We have lots of cactus that grow tall and slim like him.  
Then there is our fat friend we won't mention the name,  
But we have many cactus growing like her just the same.  
We have some sloppy friends who lay and lop around,  
Also there are cactus that lop all over the ground.  
Then there is the ornery guy that tries to stick you,  
and there are cactus that will do the same thing too.  
How about the rotten people that are as rotten as can be,  
And in your garden you'll occasionally find one, see?  
If you study them and observe real good,  
You'll find most people and cactus are nice, I know you would.  
But when you pronounce their names beware,  
Your friends will think you've learned to swear.  
Just look at their names and see what you find,  
You'll see they are from every race and clime.  
Most were from America but around the world they went,  
And acquired new names where ever they were sent.  
So you find the names Russian, Polish or Dutch,  
English, Mexican, Spanish, Peruvian and such.  
They are a lot like us though it may sound queer,  
But read on dear brother and see what's written here  
Some are smooth and some are rough,  
Some are tender and some are tough.  
Some have whiskers and some have hair,  
While some are bald with nothing there,  
While some are sharp some are green,  
And some are just naturally mean.  
Some grow big while some stay small,  
While some don't seem to grow at all.  
Some grow old while some die young,  
Just like people, ain't they? by gum.  
The things I have mentioned are only a few,  
Of their resemblance of the two of you.  
So if you'll take time to stop and ponder  
The resemblance of that cactus yonder,  
You will probably see some loving friend,  
So please be kind in your care of them.

## HCSS Member's Favorite Plant Collections

Karla Halpaap-Wood

About 15 years ago I decided to buy a selection of succulent plants, mostly euphorbias. At the same time we set up a greenhouse in my backyard. Ever since I am especially fascinated with euphorbias, but I enjoy other succulents and cacti too.



Euphorbia gemmea



Euphorbia capsaintemariensis



Euphorbia atroflora



Euphorbia horrida



Euphorbia greenwayii



Euphorbia dichroa

## COOKING WITH CACTUS

LILIANA CRACRAFT

## GRILLED CACTUS PADS (HUARACHES)

These delicious grilled nopales are topped with beans, cheese and spicy tomatillo salsa. ... Look for cleaned cactus paddles in the produce section of Hispanic grocery stores.

4 tomatillos (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound)  
 2 serrano chiles  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fresh cilantro  
 1 tbsp. oil  
 1 tsp. dried oregano  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. ground cumin  
 6 small cactus pads, cleaned  
 1 cup refried beans, warmed  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped red onion  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup Kraft Mexican-style shredded four cheese

Heat grill to medium heat.

Mix the tomatillos, chiles and cilantro in a blender to make a sauce. You can boil the tomatillos if desired, or use them uncooked.

Combine the oil, oregano, and cumin. Brush onto cactus pads, and grill them for about 8 min. or until tender. Turn them occasionally. Transfer to a plate.

Spread each grilled pad with refried beans, and top each with a spoonful of tomatillo sauce. Then cover with onions and cheese.

Serve with the remaining tomatillo sauce.

Enjoy!



1942 - 2017  
**BULB 75<sup>TH</sup> PLANT**  
 ANNUAL  
**MART**  
 THE GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON

The Garden Club of Houston is pleased to announce its 75th Annual Bulb and Plant Mart, October 12-14, 2017 at St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, 2450 River Oaks Blvd., Houston, Texas. The Mart will open Thursday, October 12th, 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. for Early Bird Shopping with a Party on the Patio featuring Live Music and Lite Bites (Admission \$20). Nearby stores will be offering discounts to Bulb Mart shoppers. Sales continue Friday, October 13th from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Saturday, October 14th from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. All sales are tax-exempt. Admission and parking are free.

Contact: Jennifer Dolman  
 jengdolman@gmail.com or 713-545-0763

## Description of Free Online Cactus and Succulent Journals

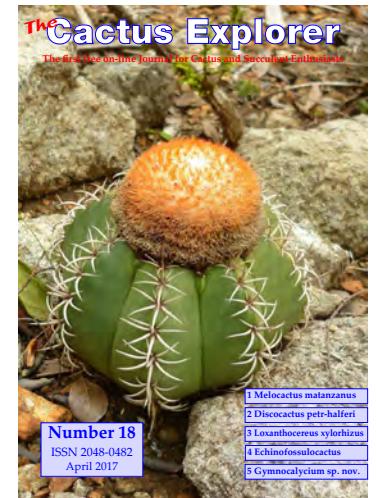
by Karla Halpaap-Wood

There are lots of high quality journals now published for free on the web. You don't have to subscribe. You can download and read what interests you. I will start with an incomplete list of the one's that I feel are the most important for us.

### The Cactus Explorers

<http://www.cactusexplorers.org.uk/journal6.htm>

There are 18 total editions with the newest from April this year, published in the UK

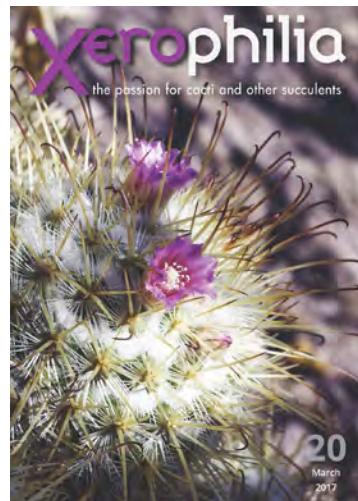


### Xerophilia

published in Romania, starting in 2012, publication in English and Romanian.

<http://xerophilia.ro>

"A passion for cacti and other succulents" is a quarterly publication and it has been created for one main purpose: the free sharing of knowledge about xerophytic plants.

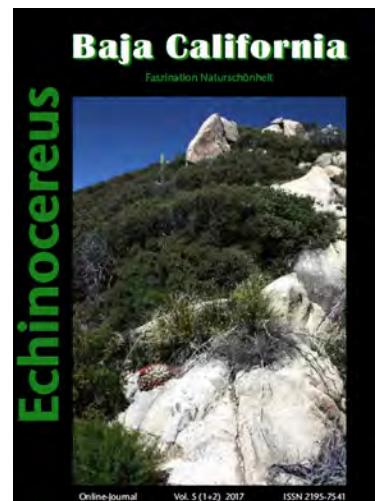


### Echinocereus

German language online publication about Echinocereus.

[www.echinocereus.eu](http://www.echinocereus.eu)

The goals for this journal are to study the genus Echinocereus, to publish articles about the continuous research on these plants (classification, morphology, evolution) as well as to protect the genus Echinocereus by reproduction from seeds and distribution of the seedlings.



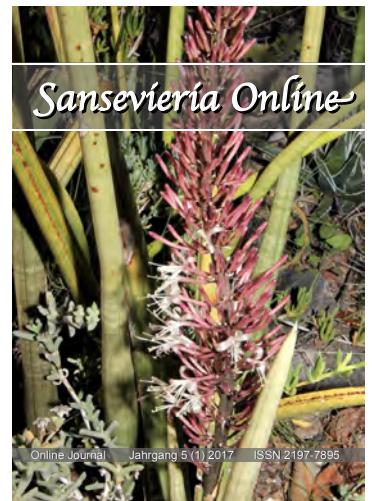
## Sansevieria online

Started in 2013, published by Peter A. Mansfeld, Hamburg.

German language publication with English summaries, two issues per year.

<http://www.sansevieria-online.de/doku.php>

The journal is devoted to knowledge and research on Sansevieria (classification, morphology, evolution), and the protection of the genus by reproduction from seeds and distribution of seedlings.



## Schütziana

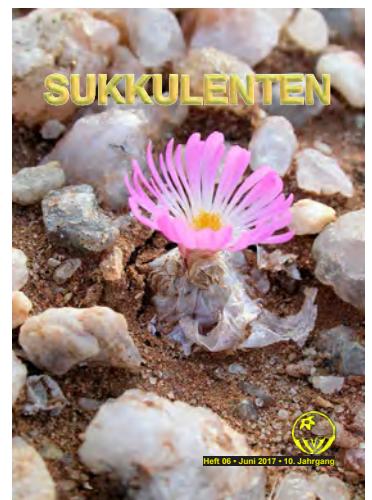
Online journal dedicated to the genus Gymnocalycium and to honor Dr. Bohumil Schütz, the famous Czech Gymnocalycium lover. Schütziana is published quarterly as pdf file for free download, text in english, German, Russian and Japanese, started in 2010

<http://www.schuetziana.org/index.php/downloads>

## Sukkulanten - Avonia News

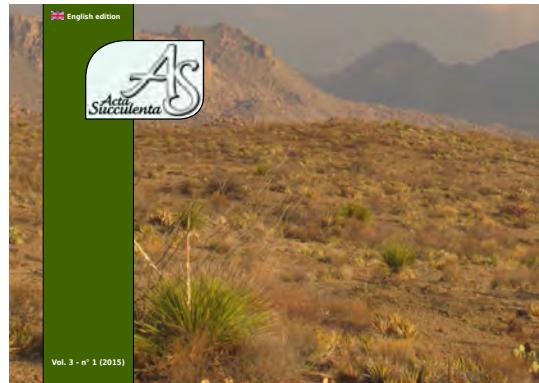
online publication from 2008-2014 as Avonia-News, now as Sukkulanten, published by Deutsche Fachgesellschaft andere Sukkulanten.

<https://fgas-sukkulanten.de/news/index.php/downloads>



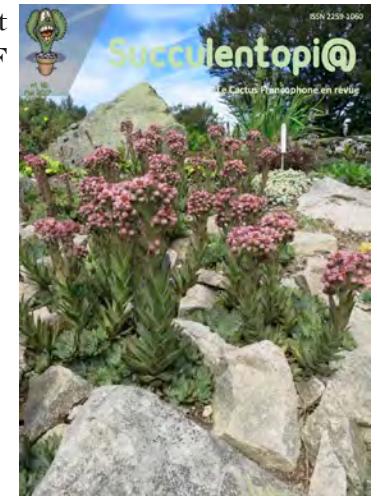
**Acta Succulenta**

published in english, Italian and French, but the last issue was 2015  
[http://acta-succulenta.eu/index.php?pg=dwn&mnu=m1\\_en&clc=1&zc=BeC](http://acta-succulenta.eu/index.php?pg=dwn&mnu=m1_en&clc=1&zc=BeC)

**Succulentopia**

The 16th issue of this free online journal has recently appeared. This was the first online journal published in French, starting 2012. It is available as a free PDF download from:

<https://www.cactuspro.com/succulentopia/>

**HCSS Leadership and Contact Info:**

President: Josie Watts, [josiewatts@mindspring.com](mailto:josiewatts@mindspring.com)  
 First Vice President: Wally Ward, [wtw3arb@aol.com](mailto:wtw3arb@aol.com)  
 Second Vice President: Cindy Gray, [grayco60@hotmail.com](mailto:grayco60@hotmail.com)  
 Recording Secretary: Rolando Ontiveros, [rolandoontiveros@outlook.com](mailto:rolandoontiveros@outlook.com)  
 Treasurer: Bruce Moffett, [bmoffett@mindspring.com](mailto:bmoffett@mindspring.com)  
 KK editor: Karla Halpaap-Wood, [khalpaap@me.com](mailto:khalpaap@me.com)

KK publisher: Imtiaz Bangee, [imbangee@yahoo.com](mailto:imbangee@yahoo.com)  
 Webmaster: Karla Halpaap-Wood, [khalpaap@me.com](mailto:khalpaap@me.com)  
 Membership: Kathy Fewox, [kathyfewox@aim.com](mailto:kathyfewox@aim.com)  
 Education: Richard Holland, [roholland@att.net](mailto:roholland@att.net)  
 Show Chairman: Daryl Rebrovich, [GestaltUniverse@gmail.com](mailto:GestaltUniverse@gmail.com)