



# EPIFLORA

Volume 10 No.2

June 2001







**WELLINGTON**

# **EPIFLORA**

**Volume 10 No. 2**

**June 2001**

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## **From the President**

Dear fellow epiphyte growers

As I write this letter near the end of May there is no doubt that winter has arrived. Gone are the drought conditions that we experienced over summer and early autumn and now the ground is drinking up the rain and the garden has its winter look. I never cease to be amazed at the changing seasons and, except for cold winter days, really am grateful that we live in a country that does have all four seasons.

At our last committee meeting it was agreed that the society should adopt the international standard of calling epiphyllum hybrids “epicacti” (or the singular “epicactus”). For many of us this change will take a while as we have incorrectly called epiphyllum hybrids “epiphyllums” for a long time. The term “epiphyllum” is strictly reserved for epiphyllum species i.e. those plants that originally came from the native habitat of epiphyllums and have not been hybridised. This change was prompted by the article that Dick Kohlschreiber of the South Bay Epiphyllum Society wrote for *Epiflora* in November 2000.

Although we are adopting the term “epicactus” for epiphyllum hybrids this does not mean we need to change the name of the society. Many epiphyllum societies around the world have already struggled with this one and decided there is no need for a name change so therefore it seems appropriate that we take cognisance of their research.

A reminder that July will be our midwinter meeting when we will have a pot luck lunch and a guest speaker. I do hope that you will be able to come to this meeting as its good to catch up with each other over lunch and I’m sure you will enjoy our speaker this year. One of the committee will phone you during the next few weeks to determine what is to be brought for lunch.

In the meantime I hope you and your plants survive the winter and that you have already put the 16-18 November in your diary and plan to be at the Convention.

Happy growing, hibernating and kind regards

*Jane Griffith*

27<sup>th</sup> May 2001



## **The Programme for 2001**

*Meetings are at Johnsonville Union Church (Dr. Taylor Terrace) and start at 2.00 pm. Library books etc. are available at 1.30 pm.*

*Those on duty are responsible for preparing the room, assisting with tea and tidying the room at the end of the meeting. If for any reason you are unable to do your allocated duty please arrange for someone else to do it.*

<b>June 9th</b>	<b>“Hoya Multiplication”</b> <u>On Duty:</u> Marion and Lewis Struthers, Aynsley Taylor.
<b>July 14th</b>	<b>Mid-Winter Programme.</b> <u>On Duty:</u> Alice and Rex Hannam, Anne Goble.
<b>August 11th</b>	<b>Guest Speaker.</b> <u>On Duty:</u> Phyllis and Bruce Purdie, Di Comber.
<b>September 8th</b>	<b>“The Forest Canopy”</b> <u>On Duty:</u> Marion Austin, Leone Neil, Penny Luckens.
<b>October 13th</b>	<b>”Some uses of Epiphytes and their Relatives</b>
<b>November 16th-18th</b>	<b>National Convention - in Wellington</b>
<b>December 8th</b>	<b>AGM and Christmas Function</b>

## “Some Other Genera”.. (photos and notes by A Flower)

### (Top Left)

“*Erythrorhipsalis pilosa*” according to the seed I got from Derek

Butcher (Adelaide) - that's a nomen numen, supposedly a synonym for *Rhipsalis baccifera* subsp. *horrida*. So far as I can tell, the plant is actually a form of *Rhipsalis pilocarpa* Lofgr. 1903 (formerly placed in a single-species genus as *Erythrorhipsalis pilocarpa*).

### (Top Right and Bottom)

“*Rhipsalis salicornioides* var. *salicornioides*” according to Kimnach - mine grown from seed ex Gerhard Kores (Germany) labelled “*Hatiora salicornioides*.”

Both plants come from South America - *R. pilocarpa* comes from Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo at 500-900 meters in seasonal forest. *R. salicornioides* is also from Brazil, where it is quite widespread from sea-level to 1850 meters.

I've only grown them in a shadehouse - solid plastic roof, windbreak walls, no heating. They seem to prefer moderate shade in my conditions, and plenty of water in the growing season. *R. salicornioides*, only one seedling thrived from about 20 that originally germinated, and it seems to be very vigorous.

## Other Genera .....

*Many of the Wellington Epiphyllum and Hoya Society meetings focus on, surprisingly, epiphyllums, epicacti or hoyas. It is good sometimes to learn about some of the “other genera” that fall within the society’s ambit. At our March meeting Andrew Flower took on the challenge. Merv Keighley reports.*

At the March meeting Andrew Flower gave a discourse on “Other Genera” – mainly other genera of epiphytic cacti.

He had specimens of various plants – including a pumpkin. This was to illustrate a point of odd man out. Obviously the pumpkin was “it”.

As always, Andrew presented a well prepared and researched talk, with many interruptions from the floor being questions, comments or just plain ignorance. A lot of scientific jargon





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was used and some of us became totally lost. Andrew can be easily sidetracked and often was, especially when he didn't have the correct notes. He is excellent at ad libbing and did.

Thank you Andrew. Please keep up the good work in attempting to educate some of us plain ignorant ones.

### ***Selenicereus chrysocardium***

*This article by Raymond Eden was first published in "Bulletin" (Vol 56/3 - March 2001) The "Bulletin" is the monthly journal of the Epiphyllum Society of America.<sup>1</sup>*

The name "chrysocardium" means "heart of gold". In fact, the plant is sometimes referred to by that name, or as "Golden Heart". Its huge, 9"~13" (23~30 cm.) diameter flowers are white with a mass of golden filaments at the centre. It is a fragrant, night blooming species collected by Tom McDougall in 1951 from Chiapas, Mexico.

For most of its existence, *Selenicereus chrysocardium* has been known as a species of the genus *Epiphyllum*. Due to a discovery in the early 1970's, Myron Kimmach now lists it under the genus *Selenicereus*. Curt Backeberg attributes it to the genus *Marniera*. The story of why the plant is no longer classed under *Epiphyllum* is interesting, and since long-time ESA member, Mr. Eckhard Meier of Simmern, Germany, played an integral part, we'll let him describe it.

"I once had a [*Selenicereus chrysocardium*] flower late in May, the only one ever, so I was able to pollinate it with pollen from epicactus 'Malcho's Beauty'. The fruit of *S. chrysocardium* was unknown at that time (but will be typical of *S. chrysocardium* no matter who the pollen-parent is,) and it was a great surprise to everybody that it was heavily spined, typical of *Selenicereus*-fruit. Up to that time, the plant was considered to be an *Epiphyllum*, but *Epiphyllum* fruit is "naked". This, and the fact that the paricarpel was also spiny, (uncommon for *Epiphyllum*,) was the reason why it is now considered to be a *Selenicereus*.

I sowed out the seed of the above mentioned fruit. Everything went very well at the beginning. The little seedlings looked healthy and grew surprisingly well. So I was looking forward to getting a lot of very promising new hybrids, but then one day, all the seedlings were killed by a fungus. This was a great disappointment to me.

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<sup>1</sup> Our library receives copies of this excellent publication

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I am absolutely certain that the seedlings of *S. chrysocardium* × ‘Malcho’s Beauty’ were the result of a successful pollination between these two parents. Of course, I cannot prove it because the seedlings were too young to show the features of either parent when they were destroyed. They looked like any other epi-seedlings. It is really a great pity that a fungus destroyed these seedlings.

Luckily, I had used *S. chrysocardium* pollen to make crosses with epicactus ‘Discovery’ [a large, yellow,] and ‘Flammenspeil’, [a large orange with violet sheen,] and with an unidentified epi. Some of these F<sub>1</sub> (first generation) seedlings were registered with the ESA, with names all beginning with ‘Hunsruck’.

As none of these new F<sub>1</sub> hybrids reveal any characteristics typical for *S. chrysocardium*, I created an F<sub>2</sub> generation of hybrids by breeding F<sub>1</sub> seedlings with each other. The F<sub>2</sub> seedlings did not show any signs of *S. chrysocardium* either. I now believe that *S. chrysocardium* pollen did not fertilize the seeds from the initial crosses. The pollen worked as a catalyst (foreign pollen influence) producing self-crosses of ‘Discovery’, ‘Flammenspeil’, etc.. This was a great disappointment for me after many years of hard work, but that’s life!

Anyone interested in hybridizing shares Mr. Meier’s disappointment. His efforts did lead to a correction of a classification error, which is more than most of us will ever achieve.

Every cultivated plant of *S. chrysocardium* is a ramet, that is, an individual member of the clone from the original cutting McDougall collected. Rumour has it that a second clone was found in Guatemala at the Chiapas, Mexico border. The second variety reportedly has stems smaller than the McDougall clone, which resemble an oversized *Epiphyllum anguliger*, but with identical flowers.

*S. chrysocardium* has a reputation for being a shy bloomer, which is said to be caused by plants not being big enough. Not long ago, a message was posted on an Internet “chat room” devoted to epiphytic cactus asking why “*Epiphyllum chrysocardium*” doesn’t bloom. Several well-meaning chatters responded. The dialogue was picked up by epi newsletters. “The plant must be huge to bloom,” was the sum total of their advice.

Where did this notion come from, and why is it so widespread? I think it can be traced to a casual remark in Rainbow Gardens’ catalogue which says with reference to *S. chrysocardium* (*Epiphyllum chrysocardium*), “You will need a lot of room to grow this plant.” This innocent comment is not a tip on how to get the plant to bloom. It cautions customers about how big this plant can become. But now it is universally misconstrued to mean the plant won’t bloom unless it is gigantic. This pearl of wisdom has been repeated so often it has the

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aura of holy writ. The problem is, it isn't true. *S. chrysocardium* will set bud when relatively small, (in the right environment). The plant will grow in every climate pocket in Southern California, from coastline where it is cool and humid, to inland areas where it is hot and dry. But none of these gives the plant what it absolutely must have to bloom— humid winter warmth.

Rudi Dorsch travelled to Chiapas, to within 13 km. of the type locality (the spot where the type specimen of the plant was originally collected). Rudi reports it is a hot, steamy jungle, and that a dense fog appears every afternoon around 4:00 p.m.. The people who are most successful at getting *S. chrysocardium* to bloom, either intentionally or accidentally simulate that habitat by growing it in a greenhouse-like environment.

Eckhard Meier: "I grew *S. chrysocardium* for many years until it grew up to such a size (several yards of length) that I had to give it away because of space problems in my relatively small greenhouse. But I love that plant because of its unique growth habit and its wonderful flowers. Here in Germany, the buds show at the beginning of November when we often have the first cold spell and when the days are grey and, of course, much shorter than in summer. "I never tried to force the plant, but grew it under relatively cool conditions (ca. 15°C, 59°F) until the buds began to develop rapidly. Then I kept the temperature somewhat warmer, which is also necessary because the blooms do not open fully when it is too cool. The flowering season begins in the middle of December when nothing else is in bloom. The first flower I had opened on Christmas Eve, and also in later years, often at Christmas or New Years Eve. One can expect the first bloom on relatively small plants. My plant had just two stems. One that carried a flower was less than three feet, which I found astonishing."

Rudi Dorsch lives in Cypress, Texas, and says he has been lucky enough to see two blooms. He has a greenhouse, but because it is the winter home to many sensitive plants in his collection, he does not have room in it to give *S. chrysocardium* a warm place to bloom. Rudi is of the opinion an orchid house is the key to getting flowers on *S. chrysocardium*. We'll get to his reasons why in a moment.

My own plant, with a span of 13 feet, is the largest I've ever seen personally, but it is by no means a world record. My plant formed a bud for the first time while it was still quite small—just three rooted cuttings, each about two feet long. The buds start forming in early October, a few weeks earlier than Eckhard reports for Germany. I assume it would bloom at Thanksgiving here in Southern California. I must assume this, because my plant has never bloomed, though it never stops trying. It is grown outdoors and invariably when the temperatures drop, so do the buds. They turn black, almost overnight, as soon as the thermometer goes below 60°F. That seems to be the magic number. In areas where night time temperatures start falling in early fall, no buds form at all.



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Rudi Dorsch gives a thrilling account of what has to be one of the largest specimens of *S. chrysocardium* in cultivation. It was at Städtische Sukkuleenten-Sammlung, a justly famous botanical garden in Zürich, Switzerland. The plant was mounted on a wall at one end of a large orchid house. Overhead, close to the ceiling, it sprawled the length of the room, and when Rudi saw it, it had hundreds of spent blooms. I get chills thinking about it.

The stems of *S. chrysocardium* itself, have sturdy midribs and loosely resemble the leaves of a banana plant. The thin, leathery “flesh” on both sides of the midrib is deeply lobed, nearly to the mid-rib, creating a bright green, fern-like effect. Stems routinely reach six feet in length, and a foot in width. Side branches are common along the length of the main stems, and extend another two yards.

The time to feed *S. chrysocardium* with something like 7-7-7 is in Spring, (when “epis” are fed bloom inducing 0-10-10 fertilizer). This should be the only application of growth-inducing fertilizer *S. chrysocardium* gets all year. Naturally, the plant must be protected from direct sunlight. Experienced growers of *S. chrysocardium* believe the plant needs a two month rest period, from mid-July through mid-August. This is achieved by not feeding it, and tapering off the amount of water it is given beginning in mid-July. Keep it on the dry side (the less wet side?) through mid-August. Keep the air around it humid by misting or by placing saucers of water nearby.

In mid-August, feed it dry 0-10-10 fertilizer to encourage flowering. And, keep the temperature above 60°F once buds form. Prune the plant in Spring. Do not hesitate to pinch off new shoots which, if allowed to grow, would create an unbalanced plant.

I’ve observed other traits worth mentioning. My plant is against a south-facing wall, under the eaves of the house. Stems at the back grow toward the house and lean against the rough stucco, but I have not seen them attach themselves with air roots in the four years the plant has been in this spot.

During Summer, a 70% shade cloth hangs in front of the plant. In contrast to the stems growing against the stucco, the tips of new growth which get rubbed by the shade cloth waving in the breeze, turn black and die back. Abrasion is the problem, since this does not happen to other new growth on the same stems which are untouched by the shade cloth.

Like Mr. Meier, I, too, love *S. chrysocardium*, and am proud of my plant of it, even if it won’t bloom where I have it growing. Still, it is not for everyone. It takes a lot of room, and will disappoint most epi growers because, if it blooms at all, it will bloom at night.

Hopefully, this article has dispelled some myths. The plant is not a shy bloomer given the right conditions, and it need not be huge to bloom. And, as for the chat rooms—you know

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the old philosophical question about a million monkeys with a million typewriters eventually producing the works of William Shakespeare? I think it's safe to say we've disproved that. Seriously though, most chat room visitors have a sincere desire to help each other with their plant related problems.

Below is a list of the hybrids Eckhard Meier registered as coming from one of his *S. chrysocardium* crosses.

'Hunsruck Charm' - ESA Reg. #11019, 1991, Eckhard Meier, *Unidentified epicactus similar to 'Moonlight Sonata' × Selenicereus chrysocardium*

'Hunsruck Cup' - ESA Reg. #11020, 1991, Eckhard Meier, *Unidentified epicactus similar to 'Moonlight Sonata' × Selenicereus chrysocardium*

'Hunsruck Feuer' - ESA Reg. #10785, 1990, Eckhard Meier, '*Flammenspeil*' × *Selenicereus chrysocardium*

'Hunsruck Rubin' - ESA Reg. #10783, 1990, Eckhard Meier, '*Flammenspeil*' × *Selenicereus chrysocardium*

'Hunsruck Silber' - ESA Reg. #11023, 1991, Eckhard Meier, '*Flammenspeil*' × *Selenicereus chrysocardium*

'Hunsruck Standard' - ESA Reg. #11024, 1991, Eckhard Meier - '*Flammenspeil*' × *Selenicereus chrysocardium*



**CONVENTION 2001**  
**Wellington**  
November 16th to 18th

Guest Speakers  
Workshops  
Visits  
Meet Friends  
....and Much More

For Further Information - Contact:  
Kaye Keighley, c/o PO Box 15024, MIRAMAR

## **The Convention.**

The convention arrangements committee have managed to secure two excellent speakers - Matthew Lark and Rob Lucas. Those of us who have heard either of them speak - will be looking forward to hearing them again in November - and to hear both ....

The list of workshops has been finalised - it was based on the feedback we got when we asked for suggestions.

You will find two conference enrolment forms enclosed with this edition of *Epiflora*, if you need more - please ask. Please use one form for each person. We suggest you send off your form and money as soon as possible (or bring them to the next meeting) - as we will fill the workshop lists on a first come, first served basis.



## **Epicacti - why and how we grow them.**

*Jane Griffith reports on the April meeting ....*

At our April meeting, which coincidentally was Easter Saturday, Roy Griffith skilfully chaired a discussion about epicacti. Roy, with the style of someone who has chaired many a meeting before, gleaned from us why we grew these plants. As you might imagine some of the answers were predictable and others, typical of our society members, absolutely straight up. Epicacti are grown for their flowers and for the fact that they require minimum care. Some people grow them for the challenge of hybridising and hopefully obtaining a unique flower while others grow them because they enjoy belonging to the society. And it was even suggested that for some it had become an addiction – no doubt a less destructive addiction than drugs or gambling!

Roy obtained from us information regarding the important components of growing our plants, noting how each of our environments is unique therefore the conditions in which we have success will differ. The following points were noted on the whiteboard:

- A. Water - how much?
  - when?
  - how?
- B. Mix - which one? Each of us has our own preference.
- C. Conditions - where the epicacti are grown
  - the amount of light they receive
  - their position regarding sun and shade
- IV. Feed - a range of fertilisers being suggested
- V. Air movement

Finally we reminded ourselves where epiphyllums grow in their natural habitat. Namely:

- I. In tropical forest
- II. Where there is an abundance of rain
- III. Growing as epiphytes in the branches of trees there is free drainage
- IV. And plenty of air movement
- V. With filtered light.

Therefore Roy suggested that we try to replicate some of the natural conditions of epiphyllums whilst recognising that the plants we grow are mainly hybrids (hence epicacti) and therefore have adapted to different growing conditions over time.

## **Epitaph for a Pot Plant**

***Someone forgot to water me,  
Feed me they did not,  
Now I'm just a dried arrangement,  
Sitting in a pot***

**Now is the time.....**

**Epicacti** - *prune and repot if necessary- water extremely sparingly*

**Hoyas** - *best left completely alone during winter*

**Schlumbergeras** - *enjoy the flowers - read Jenny's report*

**Rhipsalis etc.** - *water very sparingly*

**Schlumbergeras.....**

*Jenny Askwith prepared this report.....*

At our May meeting we had a most enjoyable informal discussion, with our panel of expert schlumbergera growers – Yvonne Johansen, Virginia Stead and Alice Hannam, chaired by our very capable and knowledgeable president, Jane Griffith.

The following text has been compiled by Yvonne Johansen from various books and past Epiflora magazines for the discussion, with comments on the day added in italics.

**Schlumbergeras** – are a native of Brazil, and come from an area with distinct wet and dry seasons. In their natural habitat, these plants grow on trees and in cracks and crevices, and therefore are most suitable for hanging baskets. Holiday Cactus, is sometimes known as Christmas Cactus, Thanksgiving Cactus or Zygocactus.

The true Christmas Cactus is an inter-specific hybrid of *Schlumbergera truncata* and *Schlumbergera russelliana* and originated about 150 years ago in England. The correct Latin name for Christmas Cactus is *Schlumbergera x buckleyi*. The “x” indicates that it is an interspecific hybrid.

Most commercial cultivars of Holiday Cactus are actually *Schlumbergera truncata* commonly known as Thanksgiving Cactus, or Zygocactus. They have segments with conspicuous teeth on the margins, rounded ovaries with no ribs and yellow anthers. Thanksgiving Cactus flowers 4-6 weeks earlier than Christmas Cactus.

A plant sold under the name *Schlumbergera bridgeii* is a hybrid.

**Propagation:** Use mature single segment cuttings taken between June and September. Gently remove segments twisting to the left and then right and pull upwards. Treat surface with a disinfectant such as a 5 minute dip in diluted bleach or as I do – a light dusting with sulphur.

The individual segments are grown as new plants on hot beds in a glass house. The temperature and humidity levels must be increased to ensure satisfactory propagation.

The panel discussed this and Alice prefers to take 2 – 3 segments and pots them up in sand or pumice, Virginia just sits them on the top of the pot and waits until the roots appear before potting. It was also noted that sometimes they do not take and it is therefore preferable to take slightly older segments.

**Growing Medium:** Use one that is high in organic matter, well drained and adjusted to a pH of 5.7 – 6.5 (slightly acidic). A sterilised mix containing a fungicide. Yvonne uses Daltons potting mix, Virginia uses “Just” from the Warehouse and Alice uses “Just” with pumice added.

**Re – Potting:** Don’t be in a hurry to put your plants into a larger pot. Repot only if necessary. Mulch with peat moss, leaf mould, used tea leaves or potting mix. Use no larger than an 18cm (7”) pot.

During discussion it was noted it is not preferable to repot if in bud – usually after flowering. Virginia potted some recently after she had bought them, and wanted to use her own mix; Alice has recently done some of hers because the soil was depleted and they really needed repotting.

**Watering Dos and Don'ts:** Water thoroughly and allow to dry out between waterings. It is better to underwater than overwater. Ease watering for 1 month after flowering or mist when necessary.

Established plants – water every 2-3 days in sunny warm weather, and 5-8 days in cool cloudy weather. Plants benefit from regular misting when brought indoors.

**Fertiliser:** Use half strength liquid fertiliser or slow release fertiliser, e.g. Phostrogen, Nutricote – 4 times a year – one with potassium and calcium will harden the segments and stop bud drop. Bud drop may also occur if a plant has been moved into a different growing position e.g. outside to inside. It was mentioned during our discussion that if you wish to avoid bud drop, move the plants indoors 4 weeks before flowering.

**Leaf Drop:** This topic was raised and it was thought that this occurred when the plant was stressed – possibly during really hot summer days when there is no air movement, as in a room shut up during the day. Also, plants that are in a windy position can become dehydrated, and will possibly drop their segments.

### **Position of Plants Flowering:**

Hanging baskets outdoors under a verandah or trees

Bring plants indoors for winter flowering

Well lit sunny position 15°C – 17°C

Plants need 12 hours of darkness

White and lemon varieties need warmer temperatures and shade to retain their light coloured flowers.

Flowering is controlled by photoperiod (light) and temperature.

It is the longer nights that trigger flowering not the shorter days (March) and temperatures of 10°C - 15°C.

**Pruning:** To keep a good round shape, prune after flowering, before the new growth appears, or plant 3 – 4 pieces in a pot.

**Pests:** Mealy bugs, slugs and snails, wetas, woodlice. Treat as usual.





## Schlumbergeras

The photographs on the opposite page show:

**Schlumbergera “Gold Fantasy” (above)**

**Schlumbergera “ Stars and Stripes” (below)**

**Advertise in *Epiflora***

Rates are:

Whole page	- \$10
Half page	- \$5
Quarter page	- \$3

Contact the Editor for further details

## Odd Cuttings and Seeds

### Cleaning Clay pots...

They look nice - and many people say they are better to grow plants in - but how do you get rid of the build up of salts etc?..here are some ideas...

“I usually use the elbow grease method, or buy new clay pots”

“I’m a bit too lazy to use elbow grease on clay pots, so I soak them in a solution of epsom salts instead. Through the wonders of ion exchange, the hard calcium deposits become soluble and can be wiped off along with algae and other grot. I then bake the pots in the oven, and they are as good as new. For me, epsom salts seem to work better than vinegar”

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**“DO NOT DO AS I HAVE DONE (but only once!):**

Put pots in the clothes washing machine.

Put a plastic pot in the oven.

Put a clay pot in the oven with residual insecticide smell. Even if it no longer smells, it will, and so will the whole house.

Use too much bleach.”

## **Web sites for “Other genera”...**

You could start with the *Rhipsalis* web site

<http://www.rhipsalis.com/>

The Smithsonian website has illustrations which may be helpful in identifying *Rhipsalis*.

<http://nrmnhwww.si.edu/botart/rhipsalis.htm>

## **Photographs...**

Picked up on an internet discussion group....

*“Hi Group,  
I have just bought a wonderful cd rom with photographs of Curt Knebel's phyllocactus hybrids made by Ashra Worldwide. The photographs are scanned from old colour slides from the period between 1940-1960. 93 different hybrids are on that cd rom and I think it is a beauty. Mmany cultivars I have only heard about are on that cd rom for example Deutschland, Heureka(the first multipetaled hybrid), Himmelsauge and many others. I bought it for US \$25 and it arrived in two days. Here is the address for some more info:*

[ashraworldwide@hotmail.com](mailto:ashraworldwide@hotmail.com)

*greetings frank”*

## **“Water, water everywhere.....”**

..But not a drop to drink” That was the cry of the Ancient Mariner - but plants see things differently. Common sense may be helpful - rather than

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the dogmatic following of someone else's advice... a good analogy is, how often should someone take a drink of water, and how much? That depends. Is the temperature 50 degrees, or 100? Is the humidity 22% or 99%? Is the person working or at rest? Is he in the sun or the shade? How much does he weigh? etc. etc.

With reference to plants, the how much is easy. When you do water, water thoroughly. That means if the plant is in a container, water should run out the drain holes.

The how often is the trick. Going by the calendar is ridiculous; so is "waiting for the plant to begin to wilt." That's too late. Besides, many succulents don't wilt anyway; they just die. You have to learn your plants and research their moisture needs; personal experience is a good teacher too. With most plants, if the top inch or so of the soil is dry it is safe to water. With succulents that may not be the case.

As a general rule, many more plants are killed by underwatering than overwatering; with succulents the opposite is true.

## **Back Numbers of "Epiflora" .....**

The first edition of *Epiflora* appeared in March 1992. We have limited stocks of back-numbers for most issues from Volume 2 - issue number 1 (March 1993) onwards. Prices are 50c per copy plus postage (if applicable) - contact the Editor ..

## **Future Publication Dates..**

*EPIFLORA* is published quarterly by the Wellington Epiphyllum and Hoya Society.

*Comments and contributions are most welcome. The society aims to encourage discussion and debate; opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the society. It is the policy of the society to publish corrections of fact but not to comment on matters of opinion expressed in other publications. All material in Epiflora may be reprinted by non-profit organisations provided that proper credit is given to WEHS, Epiflora and the author.*

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WAIKANAE.

Or: [griffith@globe.co.nz](mailto:griffith@globe.co.nz)

***Closing dates for contributions:***

***Spring 2001 edition - 11th August 2001***

***Summer 2001 edition - 10th November 2001***

## **Subscriptions:**

*Subscriptions are due on 1st of January and are:*

Members - \$12.00  
(overseas members \$NZ24.00 or \$US12.00)

Additional Associate Members - \$4.00

## **Society web address:**

***Find us on the web at : [www.anwyl.com/epihoya](http://www.anwyl.com/epihoya)***





