



Σpi News

San Diego Epiphyllum Society, Inc.

November, 2011

Volume 36, Number 11

'Heather'

Size: Medium

Cross: unknown

Hybridizer: Don Patterson, 2011

Photograph by Allen Pellymounter





President's Corner:

I can't believe it is November already. I do enjoy this time of year. I like the cooler and shorter days. It helps me get ready for and appreciate spring and summer. I'm looking forward to our guest speaker this month. Don Patterson is always entertaining and hybridizes some of the most beautiful flowers. I'm sure we will soon start to see his hybrids become more and more available.

I still have a few epies blooming. At our meetings some people have asked me what I do to make epies bloom this time of year. I told them that I don't do anything special and that there are some epies that bloom this time of the year. I looked in the fall issues of the past three years of *Epi News* to see what blooms this time of year and discovered that there are some hybrids and species that consistently bloom in the autumn. Many of the small sized hybrids bloom, such as, 'Gold Charm', 'David Wayne', 'Marmalade 'n' Honey', and 'Petey Kelly' are just a few for starters. Larger hybrids are 'Herbert S.

Irwin', 'Epi Society', 'Litega', and 'Wressey Cocke's' hybrids from his 50's cross bloom off-season. George French said that his hybrids 'Crimson Arrow' and 'Striped Beauty' are winter bloomers. 'Harald Knebel' blooms most of the year and interestingly enough not so much in May—a 'must have' in every collection. Sandra Chapin said that 'Orange Icing' seems to always have buds on her plant. Some of the species that bloom are *E. anguliger*, *E. hookeri*, *E. pumilum*, and *E. thomasianum*. This is not an exhaustive list of what blooms in the fall. Keep checking the last page of the newsletter for a list of the off-season bloomers and see what piques your fancy.

Please bring in some snacks for the meeting. Share some of your favorite desserts with us. We would all love to see some new and different things on the table. I know Marj would love the help.

Till next time –
Happy
Growing!



Jerry

SDES Meetings-

—Velma Crain

Pre-Meeting Workshop: At last month's pre-meeting workshop Ron Crain presented information about soluble salts in Southern California water and how they affect epiphyllums. Coming in November...another topic of interest to Epi lovers, seasoned and new! So if you want to be in the know about all things Epi, be there at 7:00 pm Room 104 on Wednesday, November 9th for our monthly workshop!!

October Meeting's Program: Last month Carrie Hrvatin, Volunteer Coordinator of the Zoological Society of San Diego, gave a presentation on the volunteer program for the Zoo and the Safari Park. She talked about the volunteer opportunities available at the Park and the Zoo and the process needed to become a volunteer. She also informed us that if a volunteer is only interested in volunteering at the Epiphyllum House or any of the other horticultural venues at the Zoo or Safari Park a condensed version of the orientation process is available. The

application form is available on the San Diego Zoo's website at http://www.sandiegozoo.org/volunteer/application_form.html This link is also available in the Links section on the SDES website: <http://www.SanDiegoEpi.com/epi/links>. If you have questions about the process you can email Carrie at chrvin@sandiegozoo.org. If you don't have internet access you can call her at 619-231-1515 ext. 4030. Now is your chance to sign up to volunteer!! The Zoo and the Safari Park will benefit from your help and so will the SDES!!!

November Meeting's Program:

This Month our speaker will be Don Patterson! Don is a local hybridizer and has produced many beautiful flowers. Many of these you may be familiar with: 'Smarty Pants', 'Michelle Davis' and 'Lily Dache'.

(Continued on page 3)



Safari Park Epi Display House

—By Jerry Moreau

The work and fun continue at the Safari Park. We continued the fall feeding and weeding. We potted up some of the cuttings that have been in perlite and have rooted nicely. Plans for the workhouse are under way. The plan is to have it completed before the holidays. Then, over the winter, we can move all the plants that are being stored in the display house to the new workhouse. The new workhouse will be a metal structure covered with shade cloth so it will last a long time and we shouldn't have to do this again.

The display house is now closed to the public for the winter. We will prepare the display house for EPICON in May 2012. This will

include changing some of the pathways.

Having fun together this month was Beth Jackson, Sandra Chapin, Ron & Velma Crain, Yogi & Carol Le Blanc, Laurie Lasslo, Fred Savage, and I.

If you are interested in joining the fun and learning a lot about epis in the process come and volunteer at the Park. Information on how to sign up can be found on the website www.SanDiegoEpi.org click on the Safari Park tab or contact me.

The next work parties will be November 12th and possibly the 26th.

A Few Words about 'Heather, this month's featured bloom

—By Linda Sinkovic

'Heather' is a Don Patterson cross registered this year (2011). In this case, we do know the flower was named after Heather Kercher, who was a good friend (See Page 5). I'm going to talk about a few of the other meanings of 'heather'.

'Heather' is the common name for plants in the **Ericaceae**, the heath or heather family. This family of plants includes blueberry, cranberry, azalea and rhododendron, as well as other small shrubs that are all calcium-hating and prefer acidic soils. Because of this need for acid soil, it's not too easy to grow them in the San Diego region, but the arboretums at U.C. Berkeley and U.C. Santa Cruz both have good collections of plants in the heather family.

'Heather' is also a village in Leicestershire, England, that is mentioned in the Domesday Book in 1086. By the way, this village's name is pronounced 'hee-ther', not 'he-ther'.

Heathered yarn is produced by spinning together pre-dyed fibers of different colors, for example white and black yarns to produce a grey heather. Items made from heathered yarn will often show small streaks of bright color but the overall color is muted.

And of course 'Heather' is a girl's name, from the plant name. The male equivalent is 'Heath'.

SDES Meetings- cont.

Recently Don has added 'C'est Magnifique', 'Cranberry Puff' and 'Sweater Girl' and many more to his list of creations. Please join us in Room 101 at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday November 9th !! For more information on Don Patterson, check July, 2010 Epi News and the SDES website.

SDES Calendar of Events

2011

November 9 Photo Contest

December 13 Annual Holiday Banquet

2012

May 26-27 EpiCon will be hosted by SDES in San Diego. Be sure to mark this a priority on next year's calendar!





My Oxy-genesis-



By Ron Crain

My very earliest recollection of being around an epicactus of any kind was when I was a little kid of 4 or 5 years. This would have been about 1963 or '64. We were living in Spring Valley, California and my mom was a close friend of a next-door neighbor lady, Dottie. Dottie had built a rather large lathe structure in her back yard adjacent to our fence. Among other plants, she had a big specimen of what she called "night-blooming cereus" growing in a large redwood tub. I remember on more than one occasion we would visit Dottie on a summer evening as the sun set, sitting around in the lathe house waiting for the big, super-fragrant white flowers to open.

Mom wasn't much of a gardener but she loved this plant so Dottie gave her some cuttings (they called them "slips") so she could start a plant of her own. Years later, I discovered the botanical name of this plant is *Epiphyllum oxypetalum*. The gracefully recurving calyx tube of *oxypetalum*'s flower accounts for another of its many common names, the "Dutchman's Pipe."

Our family moved many times during the next twelve or thirteen years, but this plant (or at least some cuttings from it) always came along with us, even to Seattle, Washington and eventually back to southern California. Mom passed away in '87 but that plant remained with us, neglected for more than a decade in a rotting redwood container in a forgotten back corner of the yard, watered only when it rained, never fed and surviving even the driest of the southern California drought years. Back in '99 when I first became a member of the SDES, I cleaned up this tough plant, repotted it into a large container and was astonished at how it immediately began to thrive, grew unbelievably quickly and bloomed with several flowers the very next spring. That plant is still sitting in my front yard as I write this, a direct descendant of the plant Mom started in the early '60s.

The most fragrant of all the epicacti, cloyingly so to some people, *E. oxypetalum* is also extremely vigorous and will become huge if allowed, can flower as many as three times between late spring and early fall and produce as many as 40, 50 or even 60 flowers on a single evening. On nights like this, the fragrance can admittedly become somewhat over-

whelming. Oxy will many times produce stiff, woody, upright "canes" to six or seven feet before they branch into the distinctive flat, entirely spineless growth.

Some people like epicactus species and others don't. I happen to see the merits of both the hybrids and the naturally occurring species, my favorite of which is *E. oxypetalum*. It grows like a weed, blooms reliably and it's very fragrant. What more can one ask? Most people prefer the multi-colored day blooming hybrids that last much longer and can be enjoyed in the daylight rather than the night-bloomers that must be viewed after dark and collapse the next day at the first rays of morning sun. I think my mom loved this plant precisely BECAUSE one must be slightly inconvenienced to see it bloom, giving it an aspect of novelty that the day-bloomers don't possess. Being a summer bloomer, when oxy produces flowers the evenings are typically warm and pleasant and it can be a completely different experience to be in the shade house after dark, particularly when that experience can be shared with other people. I've heard a story, which may be apocryphal, that 19th-century southern gentry would organize elaborate parties around the flowering of this plant where they would mingle and dance and sip mint juleps all the while enveloped in clouds of the wonderful perfume from its beautiful flowers.

They say the olfactory is our strongest link between senses and memory. I think this is true. I know that whenever I experience the scent of an oxy in bloom I never fail to recall my mom and those summer nights nearly fifty years ago.

Refreshments at our General Meetings:

Is it your turn to bring goodies? Bring cookies, fruit, veggies, or whatever snack suits your fancy! Call Marj Myers at 619-448-3613 or e-mail her at epinutz@att.net so she will be able to coordinate the food brought to the SDES general meetings.



Remembering a good friend

This month's San Diego Epiphyllum Society newsletter is highlighting a new and very exceptional hybrid of Don Patterson's with a photo of it on its cover. The new hybrid has been named 'Heather' in honor of Heather Kercher (1950-2011), member of the SDES and the world-wide epiphyllum community. Heather was a dedicated lover of plants and the garden with a strong emphasis on epiphyllums and their familial "relations". She became well known over the years to those active on EpiForums, largely because of her role as one of the moderators of that Internet site.

While Heather lived in British Columbia, she felt so much a part of San Diego's Epiphyllum com-

munity and would participate in SDES events whenever possible. We would see her smiling face regularly at our annual shows in recent years. She would help with the judging activities and I have often wondered if she voted for Don's 2010 prize-winning seedling that year, as she had such an eye for beauty. Little did she know at the time, but that year's winner would become her namesake. I would like to think that she DID vote for it. She remains in our hearts and now in a wonderful hybrid.

Thank you, Don... Thank you Heather.

—Allen Pellymouter



SDES Board of Directors—Slate of Officers for 2012

President: Jerry Moreau
1st Vice President (Programs): Janice Wakefield
2nd Vice President (Mother's Day Show Coordinator): Sandra Chapin
Recording Secretary: Marie Dempewolf
Membership Secretary: Beth Jackson
Corresponding Secretary: Mildred Mikas
Treasurer: Larry Taylor

Directors:
 Nominated for a 2-year term:
 Cindy Decker
 David O'Dell
 To serve the 2nd year of their 2-year term:
 Linda Sinkovic
 Ron Crain
 Bob Buchs

Now is the Time

- ✓ **Watch weather reports for freezing temperatures.** In areas that freeze, plants can be protected for a short period with newspaper, but plastic sheeting will provide more durable protection.
- ✓ **If epis are subjected to hail,** rinse the ice off immediately. Prolonged contact with ice can damage the plants more than the impact of the hail itself.
- ✓ **Protect against strong winds.** Plants in hanging pots are subject to broken branches as they bump into other pots or are knocked to the ground.
- ✓ **Withhold fertilizers** as plants become semi-dormant.
- ✓ **Avoid over-watering.** Epis require less watering during the cool, rainy season.
- ✓ **Winter rains are good for epis.** Collect rainwater in opaque containers and cover containers to keep debris out. Don't let pots on benches sit in puddles of water.
- ✓ **Continue to keep an eye out for snails and slugs.**
- ✓ **Keep plants and containers free of debris.**
- ✓ **Monitor plants for root fungus diseases.** Discoloration of branches just above the soil level may indicate problems below the soil.
- ✓ **Check fruit for ripeness.**

From our Librarian:

Outside of A Dog

Outside of a dog, a man's best friend is a book. Inside of a dog it's too dark to read. -- Groucho Marx



First of all, some administrative type stuff; this is not very pleasant but I have to bring it up. You might not be aware that keeping books out longer than a month will incur a late charge, and that's because I usually don't enforce it. Sometimes you might be in a hurry and forget the book, and that's ok with me, as long as you bring it the next meeting, or you let me know that you'll be getting it to me by such and such a time. Most members who borrow books are really prompt about bringing them back on time, or at the very next meeting, but there are few people who have had books out for a long period of time. Those people are kind of ruining it for the rest of us, since while they are keeping the books no one else can read those books. Which seems a bit unfair, since the books are here for all local members.

So I'm talking to you now, people who have had books out for more than five months: bring the book with you to the next meeting, or contact me to set up some alternative way to get the book back to the library. Do this before the end of the year, and it will be strictly between you and me. All fees will be waived and all will be forgiven. However, if you don't, I will be forced to publicly announce and fine you... and that's enough on that subject.

Betsy Markle has donated a cactus-themed mystery to our library: Queen of the Night, by J. A. Jance. Thank you Betsy! I haven't read it, but according to the blurb on the back, Tony Hillerman fans will really enjoy this book. So consider checking it out.

If you grow *Rhipsalis* alongside your epis, a book you'll be interested in checking out is Rhipsalis:

Cultivation, Care, Identification. This book contains a lot of photos, drawings, and information about *Rhipsalis*, *Lepismium* and other closely related cactus. It's an excellent book, and highly recommended if you are a *Rhipsalis* grower.

However, if you are a *Rhipsalis* grower, you're probably aware that there is a lot of renaming and re-categorizing going on, much like what is happening with the rest of epiphytic cactus such as *Disocactus*, *Psuedorhipsalis*, and so on. Since this book was printed a few years ago, the names are somewhat out of date, so although it can be used to identify your plants you'll have to cross reference the names with either the ESA Directory, or check the list of old/new names at the "Rhipsalis, Lepismium, Hatiora, Pfeiffera, Schlumbergera Home Page". This site is another great resource for *Rhipsalis* growers, so give it a look.

Have a wonderful November and enjoy your off-season blooms.

Queen Of The Night, J.A. Jance, Harper 2010, ISBN 978-0-06-204489-1

Rhipsalis: Cultivation, Care, Identification, compiled by Charles H. Everson, no ISBN
For copies, check with Chuck Everson at Cactus Bookstore (www.cactusbookstore.com)

Rhipsalis, Lepismium, Hatiora, Pfeiffera, Schlumbergera Home Page (www.rhipsalis.com)

—By Linda Sinkovic, Librarian

Memory Lane

—By Kathy Elliott, SDES Historian

Don't you love hearing how people became addicted to epis? Here is the charming story of one of our charter members, written by Gene Schmedding for the September 1981 Epi News:

Dick Hartford was the first Vice President of the San Diego Epiphyllum Society, and from the first meeting in the old Floral building where the society was first born, he and I became fast friends. Dorothy and Dick used to come to my house every Friday night and we would gossip over coffee and cake.

I asked him one time how he got to be interested in Epi's because he used to kid me and say I was out of my mind to love "these weeds," as he called them. He said that when he retired from the Navy right after WWII he needed some pocket money, so he offered to clean a neighbor's yard for her. She said "Please take those two awful looking cactus to the dump." Being a packrat, he took them home and planted them in the ground, where they bloomed in a few months. One was white and the other one red. He thought they were unusually beautiful blooms for such an odd looking plant. Then he sold his house and moved back East. Then [he] came back to Spring Valley and bought another house. He went back to the old house and asked the lady that bought it for a piece of those funny cactus.

She said "Please take the whole ugly mess." He took them home and planted them in the ground on the west side of the house, where they again rewarded him with beautiful blooms.

As he was at that time interested in ferns, he went up to Blue Bird Nursery to get a sword fern, where he met the owner Ed Stephens, who not only had ferns and other plants, but epiphyllums too. They were in bloom at the time. Dick made the remark "I didn't know that Orchid Cactus was so beautiful." Professor Irwin happened to be at the nursery at that time and scolded Dick for calling epiphyllums "Orchid Cactus," then told him about the Epiphyllum Society of America and suggested that he attend a few meetings. He did. He met many of the old timers and from then on was hooked on Epi's.

I forgot to say that Dick forgot the fern that he went to Blue Bird Nursery for, but brought home \$50.00 worth of Epi's. He found out later that his first two epi's were LON-DONII and VIVE ROUGE. So beware, all you newcomers. You never can tell what will get you if you don't watch out.

--Gene Schmedding,

EpiNews 5(9), September 9, 1981



Annual Photo Contest this month!—

Don't forget to bring your best epi photos to the November

meeting! — Criteria will be the same as last year:

- Any size photo can be entered
- Photos should be matted (not framed), but don't let that preclude you from entering your best shot. Bring it anyway!
- Please write your name on the back (with the name, if known, of the epi hybrid in the photo)
- There will be a "People's Choice" winner as well as the judges' choices.
- Winning photos will be featured on the covers of *Epi News*



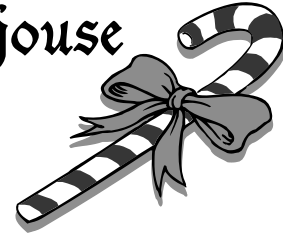


SDES 2011 Holiday Installation Banquet

Tuesday - December 13th
Cocktails 6:30 p.m. - Dinner 7:00 p.m.*

The Butcher Shop Steakhouse

5255 Kearny Villa Road - San Diego
(858)565-2272
(Visible from Hwy 163)



Join us for a festive beginning to the Holiday Season!

The doors of the Butcher Shop Steakhouse will open at 6:15 p.m.

***Wine** will be served at **6:30 p.m.** and, if you wish to purchase another type of beverage, just order from the waiters and *pay them directly*. **Dinner** will be served at **7 p.m.** Installation of officers and remainder of program will follow dinner.

Don't forget our optional **Holiday Gift Exchange** (Items of \$15.00 value, garden-related, and wrapped would be nice). Bring something you yourself would like to receive! There will be a drawing for a door prize as well as a drawing for those who "Wear Your (SDES) Name Tag" .. See you there!

Tickets are only \$25.00 for members (the society pays the rest) and \$45.00 for guests. Dues must be current and paid through January, 2012. Choose Filet Mignon or Mahi Mahi and pay for your dinner at the October or November meeting. Or mail a check to:

Mildred/Gerry Mikas - 3502 Avenida Amorosa, Escondido CA 92029

For questions call 760-690-1124 or e-mail mvmikas@cox.net

All reservations must be made and paid for by Nov. 30th. **There will be no sales at the door!**

Please make your selection with care, as we are unable to accommodate any changes that evening.

Entrée tickets will be available at the door on the night of the dinner.

Pink Tickets for Mahi Mahi and Green Tickets for Filet Mignon



Welcome to our New Members!

Sally Grout
San Carlos, CA



Eliz Zimmerman
Chula Vista, CA
91911

Oliver Lapuebla
San Diego, 92139



I would also like to thank our existing members for renewing. We all have a choice about discretionary spending and **we are glad** you spend some of your hard-earned money to remain members of SDES. Each member is valued and appreciated. A society is only as strong as its membership, and SDES is fortunate, indeed!

—Beth Jackson, Membership

Off-Season October Blooms



Sandra Chapin: ‘America’, ‘Baja’, ‘Bumpkin’, ‘Elberta Kipp’, ‘Ernst Gündchen’, ‘Flirtation’, ‘Futon’, ‘George's Favorite’, ‘Gypsy Doodle’, ‘Harald Knebel’, ‘Kami’, ‘Möve’, ‘Orange Icing’, ‘Roseus Suprebus’, ‘Silly Girl’, ‘Snowflake’, ‘Something Special’, ‘Strictum’, ‘Tara’, and several Christmas cactus, (perhaps they want to be Halloween cacti)

Mildred Mikas: ‘Dee Dee’, ‘Elberta Kipp’, ‘Generiis’, ‘King Midas’, ‘Mr. Gus’, ‘Sun Dancer’, *E. cartagense*, *E. hookeri*, *ssp hookeri*

Jerry Moreau: ‘Christmas Elf’, ‘Country Meadow’, ‘Donald Raymond’, ‘Gold Charm’, ‘Marmalade ‘N’ Honey’, ‘Mecca’, ‘Naranja’ (JHSN)

Don Patterson: ‘Crystal Claret’, ‘Herbert S. Irwin’, ‘Jalisco Disco’

Allen Pellymouter: ‘Lilli Paetz’, ‘Something Special’, ‘Tassel’

Pentico: ‘Harald Knebel’, ‘Indian Warrior’, ‘King Midas’

Safari Park: ‘Chimu’, ‘David Wayne’, ‘Front Runner’, ‘Harald Knebel’, ‘Slim Hathaway’, ‘Thai Silk’, *E. anguliger*, *E. hookerii ssp hookeri*, *E. thomasianum*

Linda Sinkovic: ‘Gabi Paetz’, ‘Gold Charm’, ‘Marmalade ‘N’ Honey’, *Epiphyllum anguliger*, *Rhipsalis elliptica* (and lots of Schlumbergera)



Want List



Beth Jackson would like to add two more hybrids to her collection: ‘**Martian Bells**’ and ‘**Vive Rouge**’. If you can spare her a cutting or two, please let her know:

bethjackso@yahoo.com (858) 638-0956.

Garden Club Auction to benefit college scholarships

The San Carlos Garden Club will be having their annual Holiday Luncheon and Auction to raise funds for college scholarships on November 19, 2011. It will be at the San Carlos Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 6554 Cowles Mountain Blvd., San Diego starting with appetizers at 10:30 a.m. and live auction to start at 11:00 followed by a delicious lunch. There will be great gift items, plants, baked goods and many other unique things to bid on. Tickets are \$9 in advance. For more information, call Marj at 619-448-3613

Details of How To Become A Volunteer at the Safari Park:

Can be found on our website:

SanDiegoEpi.org. Click on “Safari Park”, then click on “Epi House”, then “Volunteer”.

Membership:



Single Membership \$15.00 per year

Dual Membership \$20.00 per year

(Dual is for two people, same address, one newsletter)

International Membership \$25.00 per year

Epi News is published monthly. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Please let the editor know of your intention to submit any articles by the date of the General Meeting so that appropriate space can be allocated.

(e-mail at jillrowney@yahoo.com)

Have You Moved?

If you have moved or recently changed your address, please let us know your new address so that you can continue to receive your newsletter without interruption. Send it to membership – USPS or email address : (PO Box 126127, San Diego, CA 92112-6127 or sdes_roster@hotmail.com)

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SAN DIEGO EPIPHYLLUM SOCIETY
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Coordinator– Sales Events:

Director: **Cindy Decker:** (619) 698-6662

Coordinator– Garden Caravan; Chair- EpiCon XIII:

Director: **Mildred Mikas:** (760) 690-1124

Librarian:

Director: **Linda Sinkovic:** (619) 583-1172

Coordinator– Hospitality:

Director: **Bob Buchs:** (858) 792-8081

Past President: **Sandra Chapin**

Coordinator Safari Park :

Jerry Moreau: jerrysdca@cox.net (619) 208-7654

San Diego Epiphyllum Society, Inc (SDES)

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SDES Web Site: www.SanDiegoEpi.org

Membership queries: sdes_roster@hotmail.com

General membership meetings are held
on the second Wednesday of each month
at 7:30 p.m. in Room 101,
Casa del Prado, Balboa Park

**NEXT GENERAL MEETING:
November 9, 2011**

SDES Board Meetings are held
on the fourth Wednesday of each month
at 7:00 p.m. in Room 104,
Casa del Prado, Balboa Park.

Next Board meeting will be:
November 23, 2011