

DEDICATION: Reid Moran, 1916–2010

A major figure in succulent botany has left us: Reid Moran died on January 25, 2010, at the age of 93.

Dr. Moran was born in Los Angeles and grew up in Pasadena. He became interested in plants as a child. One person who encouraged that interest was Ellen Rooksby, editor of *Desert Plant Life*, in which appeared, in 1942, one of his first articles, *The Crassulaceae of Yosemite National Park*. He later published several important works in the same journal about his favorite family, the Crassulaceae. He also wrote numerous articles for the *Cactus & Succulent Journal* (US) and its yearbook, *Haseltonia*, mostly about *Echeveria*, *Pachyphytum*, and *Sedum*.

World War II interrupted his career from 1942 to 1946, when he was a flight navigator in the Army Air Force. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross after his plane was shot down over Yugoslavia during a bombing mission. Parachuting into German-occupied territory, the crew was able to avoid capture. Making the most of this opportunity, Reid managed to jot down notes about several interesting plants he observed during his escape.

He had obtained a biology degree at Stanford in 1939 and went on to earn his master's at Cornell in 1942 and his doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1951. For 25 years he was Curator of Botany at the San Diego Natural History Museum, concentrating on nearby Baja California, Mexico. Most of his explorations of that peninsula were carried out during the 1950s and 1960s and involved much travel on rough, unpaved roads or even by mule-back along trails. He had a major interest in the Mexican island of Guadalupe — some 160 miles west of the mainland — and visited it 20 times, recording the flora that was declining due to introduced goats. His important monograph, *The Flora of Guadalupe Island*, was published in 1996. Appropriately, his ashes have been scattered in the Pacific adjacent to Baja California.

Reid was well-known in the botanical world for his wise botanical decisions and meticulous writing but also for his distinctive sense of humor. While botanizing on Okinawa, he sent a hard-boiled egg to the head of the UC Berkeley botany department; it was unpackaged but stamped and had the name and address written on

the shell. The mailman delivered it uncracked, handling it gingerly in case it was a raw egg. Reid also wrote a taxonomic key for identifying the staff-members of the department, using botanical terms to describe their physical attributes, including gender.

My first trip to Mexico was in 1959, when I spent six weeks travelling with Reid. I always sent my articles to him for corrections and suggestions — he was my mentor!

Myron Kinnach

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Reid Moran with Annetta Carter, 1990. © San Diego Society of Natural History.



Reid Moran collecting plants at Puerto Refugio, Isla Angel de la Guarda, c. 1962
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