

THE LEAFLET

The Monthly Magazine of the Vallarta Botanical Garden

September 2015



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**Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, México
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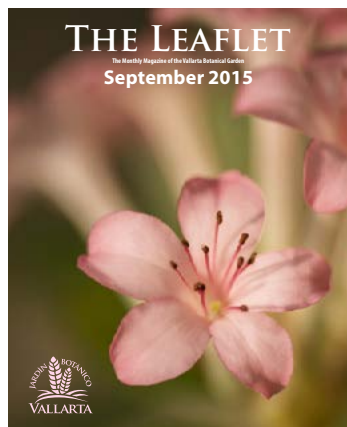
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Cover photo: Mansur Kiadeh
Vireya Rhododendrons



www.vbgardens.org

Curator's Corner

Dear Friends of the Garden,

September, traditionally the quietest month for tourism in Puerto Vallarta, seems like a very appropriate time to discuss how to best improve our beloved city and the surrounding region to ensure the future success of Vallarta as a world-class vacation destination.

During a recent visit to Puerto Vallarta by Peter Tarlow, a respected international tourism security authority, we heard a confirmation of what we have long known to be true: those communities that invest in urban beautification and landscaping can bolster tourism and suppress the criminal element. Puerto Vallarta is a beautiful city, but we can stand to prosper much more if we put a lid over our trash and make our blocks a little greener. Something as simple as the new bins the PV Garden Club has prototyped can contain unsightly

trash piles and keep nasty odors at bay. A combination of such simple acts and some carefully attended landscaping can be truly transformative. Collectively, between sponsoring such bins and sprucing up our streets with well-attended urban planters, we can turn this town towards a trajectory of becoming the number one tourist destination in the country.

Revolutionize your city by advancing and preserving beauty to create prosperity—the economy that you bolster may be your own! You may contact the Garden Club by writing to the club president, Bonnie Mott bonmott@hotmail.com.

**In friendship,
Bob Price, Founder and Curator, VBG**

Do you enjoy receiving The Leaflet??

Please tell us what you like reading!

Post your thoughts:

<https://es-es.facebook.com/vbgardensac>

Nardo
Photo: Gerardo Luna

Mexican Orchid Of the Month

***Encyclia vitellina* (Lindl.) Dressl.**

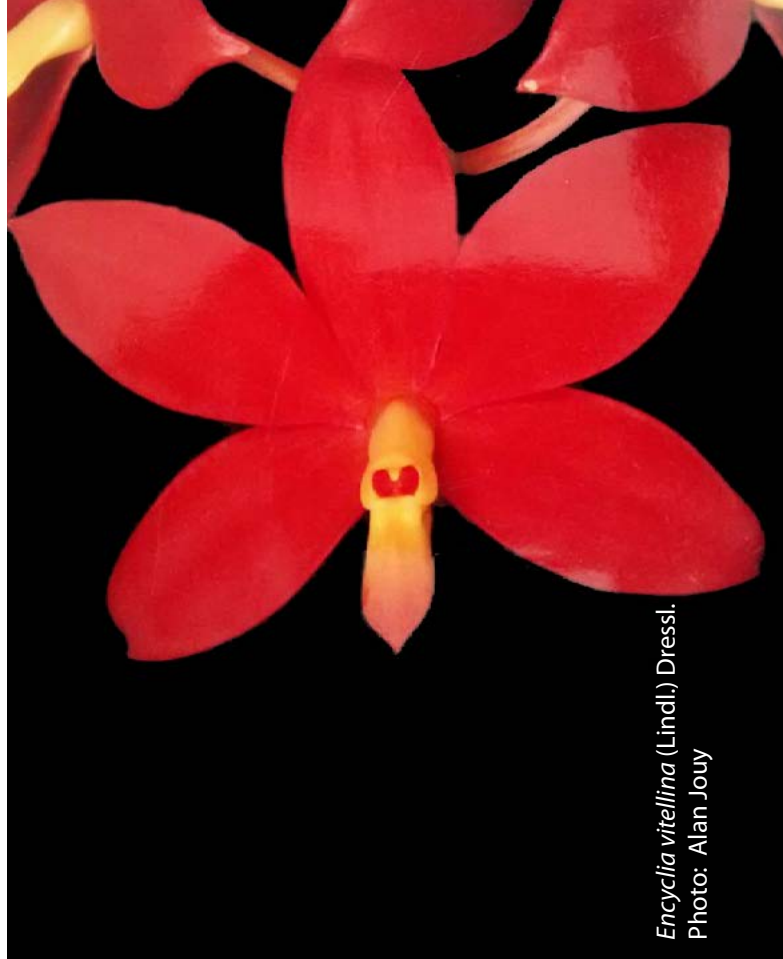
By Lizbeth Hernández Hernández, Biologist & Co-author of “Las orquídeas del occidente de México, Volumen 1”

This beautiful flower is located in the Mexican states of Puebla, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Chiapas and across the border into Guatemala.

It inhabits forests of pine and oak and cloud forest at altitudes ranging from 1500 to 2000 meters above sea level. Among its distinguishing features are its inflorescences with one to two racemes and each of these with 4-12 flowers. The labellum or lip (distinct from the other two petals) is narrow, yellow and shorter than the sepals.

It is the only species of its genus with flowers of red or orange to be found in Mexico or Central America.

Cultivating it is considered difficult, and it is best not to purchase plants for this purpose. We invite orchid aficionados to bring their cameras when seeking them in the wild so they can later be enjoyed any time of year.



Encyclia vitellina (Lindl.) Dressl.
Photo: Alan Jouy

Mexican Bird Of the Month

Tyrannus melancholicus

The Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) is last on our list in a series of articles in *The Leaflet* about several local yellow-chested birds that are notoriously hard to tell apart by amateur birders, the others being the Great Kiskadee, Social Flycatcher, and Boat-billed Flycatcher.

Of the four, it's generally the easiest to tell apart because it has a mostly grayish head instead of the more distinct white head and black eye stripe of the others. In the early morning light this might be hard to distinguish though because even this bird does have a noticeable eye stripe which is a darker hue of gray than the rest of its head. Like the others it is very vocal and spends much time at a prominent perch but it tends to forage much more than pick off its prey in mid-air. For those who wish to learn more about tropical bird ID, just read on to the next article about our International Migratory Bird Day Event...



Tyrannus melancholicus
Photo: Petr Myska



© Amelia Hansen for
Environment for the Americas
International Migratory Bird Day

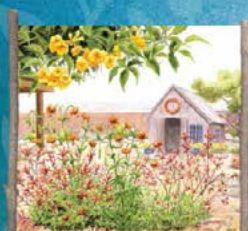
International Migratory Bird Day

October 10th at the Vallarta Botanical Garden

The natural paradise of our region is a legendary destination for human "snowbirds" that flock to Puerto Vallarta each year to escape harsh northern winters. Our feathered friends have a similar migratory pattern and October marks the return of many migratory species. Join us for a day of early morning guided birding hikes starting at 8:00 am followed by a presentation from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm about many of the wonderful migratory and resident birds of our region.

Event entry is included in regular garden admission (adolescents and adults 80 pesos, children 20 pesos). Registration is not *required*, but a quick email to let us know how many guests to expect would be highly appreciated! eventos@vbgardens.org

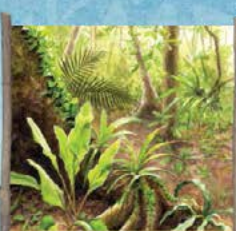
Restore Habitat,



YARDS



MANGROVES



TROPICAL FORESTS



WETLANDS



GRASSLANDS



Rufous
Hummingbird



Yellow
Warbler



Blue-crowned Motmot
Black-and-white Warbler



Northern Pintail
Northern Harrier



Eastern
Meadowlark

Restore Birds

**INTERNATIONAL
2015 MIGRATORY
BIRD DAY**

Vallarta Cacao & Chocolate Festival

October 17 & 18, 2015 at the Vallarta Botanical Garden

Engage your taste buds, minds and imaginations for a chocoholic's dream weekend. Money may not grow on trees, but who needs that if you can grow your own chocolate? Event entry is included in regular garden admission (adolescents and adults 80 pesos, children 20 pesos).

Event Itinerary

Sat., Oct. 17

Noon – 5:30 pm

Open House of the Special Exhibition:
Chocolate, Gift of the Gods

1 -2 pm

Guided tour of the VBG's Theobroma cacao groves

2 - 5 pm

Presentations from a series of dynamic guest speakers

Sun., Oct. 18

Noon – 5:30 pm

Open House of the Special Exhibition:
Chocolate, Gift of the Gods

1 -2 pm

Guided tour of the VBG's Theobroma cacao groves

2 - 4:30 pm

Presentations from a series of dynamic guest speakers

4:30 - 5:30 pm

Closing celebration with live music

Guest guides, lecturers, and exhibitors including:

Fernel Bobadilla

Director of Amo Cacao, a Guadalajara based network of organic cacao farmers

Ana Rita García Lascurain

Director of the museum MUCHO Mundo Chocolate in Mexico City

Leslie Korn, PhD, MPH

Author of *Chocolate, Chilies and Coconuts: The Culture and Cuisine of West Mexico*

Doreen Pendgracs

Author and owner/guide of the Canadian based company Chocolatour

...along with several area chefs and restaurateurs



Theobroma cacao, Fruit
Photo: Mansur Kiadeh

For more info: www.vbgardens.org/cacaofest

Registration is not required, but a quick email to let us know how many guests to expect would be highly appreciated! eventos@vbgardens.org.



Theobroma cacao, Flower; Photo: Mansur Kiadeh



The Vallarta Botanical Garden's 10th Anniversary Celebration

November 14 & 15, 2015



VBG in 2005



VBG in 2015

Adding a second digit to one's age is a right of passage of sorts. For a privately initiated public institution such as the Vallarta Botanical Garden, it's evidence that the project has been truly embraced by its local community and destined to become a legacy for future generations. Ringing in such a milestone is a brilliant opportunity to not only celebrate with the local community, but to also welcome in supporters who have embraced this vision with us from near and from afar.

All are invited to a magical weekend on November 14th and 15th to experience the Garden and learn from what others have to share when we will receive more of our professional colleagues with us than any other moment in our history. So far, plant researchers and botanical garden staff representing 12 different institutions have confirmed their participation. They will share their knowledge with

the public through guided hikes, open house experiences, special exhibits, and captivating talks by dynamic guest speakers. After a time to learn, we welcome you to celebrate as each evening a series of great local live music acts will take the stage. Event entry is included in regular garden admission (adolescents and adults 80 pesos, children 20 pesos).

If you'd like to be part of making this a truly unforgettable experience, please check in with the Garden's Event Committee Vice Chair, Sue Keevil info@pvseadive.com for communications in English, or our biology intern, Cynthia Martinez Hernandez biologia@vbgardens.org for communications in Spanish. We're still in need of volunteers (especially plant experts and/or aficionados for tours and our open house) as well as event sponsors.

Event sponsorship opportunities are as follows:

	New Sponsors	Current Copa de Oro Members & Above	Event Sponsorship + Copa de Oro Membership
Reaching Roots Sponsor	1,000 MXN 62.50 USD	800 MXN 50.00 USD	8,300 MXN 518.75 USD
Strengthening Trunk Sponsor	3,000 MXN 187.50 USD	2,400 MXN 150.00 USD	9,900 MXN 618.75 USD
Golden Bough Sponsor	5,000 MXN 312.50 USD	4,800 MXN 300.00 USD	12,300 MXN 768.75 USD
Crowning Canopy Sponsor	10,000 MXN or more 625.00 USD or more	8,000 MXN or more 500.00 USD or more	15,500 MXN 968.75 USD

Sponsorship payment and logos must be received by September 15 to be included. Please see contacts listed above.



In Good Company:
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director of the VBG

We at the Vallarta Botanical Garden are celebrating our inclusion in the 2015 list of the “TOP 10 North American Gardens Worth Travelling For,” in part, by a series of articles highlighting the prestigious gardens sharing this list with us. The Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FTBG) in Coral Gables, Florida, was established by Robert H. Montgomery in 1936 and named after his friend David Fairchild, one of the preeminent plant explorers of his time. Another leading botanic institution, The Montgomery Botanical Center was later named in honor of the FTBG founder, a thorough plant collector in his own right.

From the original plantings of these botanical pioneers to the disciplined professionals that have since taken up their vision, FTBG boasts extensive collections of tropical plants including many that are considered very rare. Notable collections include palms, cycads, flowering trees, vines, and orchids. In fact, since 2012 the American Orchid Society has based its headquarters at the Fairchild.

2015 List of the, “TOP 10 North American Gardens Worth Travelling For” <i>As declared by the Canadian Garden Tourism Council (Listed in alphabetical order)</i>	
Butchart Gardens	Canada
Chanticleer	USA
Denver Botanical Gardens	USA
Desert Botanical Garden	USA
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden	USA
Huntington Botanical Gardens	USA
Jardín Botánico Culiacán	Mexico
Jardín Botánico de Vallarta (Vallarta Botanical Garden)	Mexico
Longwood Gardens	USA
Montreal Botanical Garden	Canada



The research and conservation of this garden is shared with the public through award-winning educational programs for all ages of learners. Festivals, including the "International Chocolate Festival" hosted there create powerful connections between plants and people through one of the most powerful senses. If you can't make it to Fairchild to experience this yourself though, fear not. Next month the VBG will host our region's own "Vallarta Cacao & Chocolate Festival." Just like great plants, great ideas are meant to be shared!



*As declared at the North American Garden Tourism Conference in Toronto, Canada March, 2015

Photos on these pages provided courtesy of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden.



Curating Bromeliads

By Alan Heinze, Research Coordinator, VBG

As you take a closer look and begin to learn about bromeliads, they astonish you with their discreet beauty and importance. I was quite impressed myself when for the first time I encountered a small pineapple growing from the rosette of a bromeliad. The bromeliad family (Bromeliaceae) is composed of more than 3,000 species found mainly in the tropics of the Americas, and are distributed in habitats from cloud forest to desert. You may be familiar with Spanish Moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*, not actually a moss nor from Spain) used in Latin American Nativity scenes, have seen 'air plants' growing on local trees, or be aware that this country is among the top 10 pineapple producers worldwide. But what's more incredible is that over 70 species of bromeliads are important for rural communities all over Mexico. They are used as furniture filling, musical instruments, coffee substitute and even for decorating piñatas, not to mention their medicinal, ceremonial and ornamental purposes among many others (Sandoval-Bucio et al., 2004).



The Vallarta Botanical Garden has worked enthusiastically at curating the bromeliad collection for the last couple months, recording more than 50 species so far without counting all the spectacular hybrids in cultivation. What's more, we've spotted and identified different native species growing in our forests, including *Aechmea bracteata* and *A. mexicana* as well as *Tillandsia juncea*, *T. polystachia*, *T. caput-medusae* and *T. jalisco-monticola*. Part of the work has involved updating the display and accession labels for these plants, with their scientific and local names and information on their natural distribution; this will allow to appreciate the diversity and taxonomy of this marvelous plant family even more. So come and enjoy the bromeliads at the VBG, their subtle beauty will make you want to learn more!

Sandoval-Bucio, E.N., Flores-Cruz, M. y Martínez-Bernal, A., 2004. Useful Bromeliads from Mexico. *Cactáceas y Suculentas Mexicanas*, XLIX 49(4):100-115.

Photos (by Alan Heinze)

1. Facing page, upper photo
Aechmea mexicana growing naturally by the river neighboring the Vallarta Botanical Garden.
2. Facing page, lower photo
Aechmea bracteta in display at the Conservatory.
3. This page:
Our new public display labels.



Botanical Explorations with Dr. Pérez de la Rosa

By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director of the VBG

On Saturday, August 29th a few of us from the Vallarta Botanical Garden joined a visiting friend for some fascinating plant explorations along a mountain river encountered on the way to El Tuito. Our visiting friend, Dr. Jorge A. Pérez de la Rosa, a researcher with the University of Guadalajara's (UDG) *Instituto de Botánica* (Botanical Institute) at their CUCBA location (the biological science and agriculture campus), is among the world's top pine researchers and an expert on high elevation plants encountered throughout Mexico and beyond. Those who joined us from the Garden were Bob Price, the VBG's founder and curator; Daniel de Jesús Ibarra Macedo, a horticulturalist with the VBG; and Cynthia Martínez Hernández, a Garden biology intern from the UDG's local CUC campus.

Hiking through the woods with someone who has devoted his life to the study of plants is a bit like following someone to a family reunion who loves their kinfolk. There are introductions, descriptions of the family tree, explanations for unusual behaviors, and of course lots of stories. Dr. Pérez de la Rosa demonstrates a deep love for the natural world and an infectious enthusiasm for learning its intricacies and interpreting these to others so they may equally love and care for our forests as well.

The predominant vegetative cover in the forest that we visited are pine and oak trees, many of which are elderly behemoths with their canopies encrusted in bromeliads, orchids, and other epiphytes and their lower flanks cloaked in velvet-like moss. During the summer rainy season even the boulders there are carpeted in moss and water is so ubiquitous that it is hard to imagine that for more than half of the year the same place can be as dry as a desert. Along the way Dr. Pérez dazzled us with details about his floristic "family" faster than our memories could keep up with.

A few useful details about local pines is that the species most predominant in our coastal region is *Pinus maximinoi* followed by *P. oocarpa*. These can be differentiated most easily by the longer needles of *P. maximinoi* versus the shorter ones of *P. oocarpa*. The later also has noticeably egg-shaped cones, for which its specific name is derived from the combination of these words in Greek.



The common name for this species is “ocote” which also refers to its wood, popularly used as a waterproof fire starter.

For a chance to meet Dr. Jorge A. Pérez de la Rosa and learn from such a knowledgeable yet patient teacher, we invite you to the VBG during our 10th Anniversary Celebration, November 14-15th. Dr. Pérez will be among dozens of botanical professionals from throughout Mexico and beyond who will be available to share information and inspiration with our garden visitors during this very special weekend.



Photos (by Neil Gerlowski), clockwise from the upper right corner of the facing page:

1. Dr. Jorge A. Pérez de la Rosa & Cynthia Martínez Hernández next to a mature *Pinus maximinoi*
2. A wild *Dahlia* (the national flower of Mexico) with pollinating insect
3. *Cuphea* (Lythraceae family)
4. When covered with moss, even the rocks appear alive!
5. *Dioon tomaselli*



Sedum perezdelarosae

By Neil Gerlowski, Executive Director, VBG

Our friend Dr. Jorge A. Pérez de la Rosa brought us a truly incredible gift upon his last visit—a recently described plant named in his honor. The plant, *Sedum perezdelarosae*, was first brought to the attention of botany experts in May of 2010 after two biology students from the *Universidad Veracruzana*, Martín Rivera and Miguel Mejía noticed it growing atop a rocky outcropping while on a hike in the *Municipio* (county) of Ixtacamaxtitlán, Puebla. The students photographed the plant and showed the images to their professors. When *Universidad Veracruzana* researchers H. David Jimeno Sevilla (who began his botanical studies as a student of Pérez de la Rosa at the *Instituto de Botánica, Universidad de Guadalajara*) and Ampara Albalat Botana could not accurately identify it from the photos, their curiosity brought them out to the field to observe this plant in its natural habitat.

Later study confirmed it to be a new species, most closely related to *S. batallae* which also shares its diminutive size and densely clumped growing habits. *S. perezdelarosae* differs by having a larger rosette and stem along with different leaf shape, different sized inflorescences, and differently colored corolla. Sedums are the most diverse and widespread members of the Crassulaceae family with 428 species described so far with 110 of these native to Mexico, 100 of which are endemic to this country.

This lovely plant is now on display at the Vallarta Botanical Garden in the Vallarta Conservatory of Orchids and Native Plants. We are looking forward to the late spring or early summer when its reportedly very beautiful yellow flowers will first bloom.



Sedum perezdelarosae
Photo: Gerardo Luna

Vallarta Botanical Garden's Calendar

DATE		EVENT	COST
		GARDENS ARE CLOSED ON MONDAYS FROM APRIL UNTIL DECEMBER	
16	SEP	<i>Día de la Independencia (Independence Day) Mexico</i> — Garden remains open.	Included with entry
10	OCT	<i>International Migratory Bird Day</i> — Learn about the birds returning to winter in Mexico.	Included with entry
17-18	OCT	<i>Vallarta Cacao & Chocolate Festival</i> — Discover the joys of Mexico's gifts to your taste buds through food, beverages, and demos/presentations by guest chocolate experts.	Included with entry
1	NOV	<i>Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)</i> — A cultural delight of memorials, flowers, and other offerings to the departed.	Included with entry
14-15	NOV	<i>VBG's 10th Anniversary Celebration</i> — A full weekend of events to include guided hikes, open house experiences, captivating talks by dynamic guest speakers, live music, and more!	Included with entry

* Some activities subject to change. The most current calendar, often with links to further event information, can be viewed at www.vbgardens.org/calendar.



Garden Hours

Open 7 days/wk

Open 6 days/wk

Early "Bird" Opening

Daily Guided Tour

9 am – 6 pm

for the months of Dec., Jan., Feb., & March (except Christmas & New Year's Day)
(Closed Mondays) April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., & Nov.

8 am every Thursday

1 pm (Offered for the months of Dec., Jan., Feb., & March)



Photo: Gerardo Luna



Michaela Flores, Membership Coordinator, VBG
memberships@vbgardens.org

From the Membership Desk

I'm back! I've just returned from an extended visit to the US where I even spent some time making friends at the Portland Japanese Garden in the state of Oregon. As much as I enjoyed visiting other places, there's "no place like home" and I'm happy to have returned, inspired for another great season here starting with a big bash for the VBG's 10th Anniversary.

Members: please always wear your membership card when visiting the Garden. This helps our staff and volunteers recognize you as members and offer discounts on your Garden purchases.

Can you find your name on our WALL OF BENEFACTORS?

If you're not yet "on the wall" we invite you to join the family that preserves the Garden forever!

Becoming a member is easy & provides great benefits:

www.vbgardens.org/memberships

A high resolution image of this photograph is available at www.vbgardens.org/benefactors



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Cattleya sp.
Photo: Mansur Kiadeh

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(S) = student (I) = individual ☼ = deceased

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Your Donations to the Vallarta Botanical Garden are Greatly Appreciated

México



- **Tax-deduction receipts** are available for donations to the Vallarta Botanical Garden made through the *Fundación Punta de Mita* (FPM).
- **Please send an email earmarking your gift for the Vallarta Botanical Garden to donaciones@fundacionpuntademita.org with a copy to info@vbgardens.org**
- In this email please include your name, the date your gift was sent, and the amount of your gift.

Checks may be mailed to:

Fundación Punta de Mita, A.C.
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Canada



- Our educational programs qualify for **tax-deduction receipts** provided by The Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation (CCSHF)

Cheques may be mailed to:

Canadian Children's Shelter of Hope Foundation
87 Lavinia Ave
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Canada

Please write "VBG" for "Vallarta Botanical Gardens" on your cheques.

Alternatively, you may donate using a credit card through CanadaHelps.org (whose donation page is linked to the CCSHF website www.ccs hf.ca) selecting the "Vallarta Botanical Gardens Fund."

USA



- Our direct support 501(c)3, "Friends of Vallarta Botanical Gardens, A.C." issues **tax-deduction receipts**:

Checks may be mailed to:

Friends of Vallarta Botanical Gardens, A.C.
759 North Campus Way
Davis, CA 95616

Wire transfers / direct deposits can be sent to:

Routing number: 322271627

Your choice { General Fund Account: 0635607190
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Credit Card Payments:

Call us w/ your card info: +52 322 223 6182

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