



COURTESY PHOTO

Above is one of the photos by Stephen Johnson on display in Pacifica.

Exhibit delves into the realm of the very small

By Jane Northrop
Staff Writer

The very little things so captivated photographer Stephen Johnson he created an exhibit all about them.

It's a departure for Johnson, who has acquired acclaim for his photography of great big landscapes, such as Yosemite and the Grand Canyon. Five years in the making, the exhibit builds on Johnson's fascination with the natural world of plants and what lives on them and visits then.

"It's a different work but grounded in the same aesthetic, a passion to portray the real world in wonder, delicacy and beauty," Johnson said.

In this exhibit called "Life Form," Johnson displays 22 close-ups of plants. Most of the plants come from Nancy Davis's Sheldance Nursery in Pacifica. Johnson asked Davis for permission to come in and take pictures so many times, she gave him access whenever he wanted.

Mauna Loa Succulent, Echeveria, at Sheldance, shows bright red, blue veined leaves that are bumpy

and strange looking, but magnificent at the same time. Another Sheldance plant is Lady Slipper with Stag Horn, Paphiopedilum, an interesting detail with spots and stripes together. Flora Carnivores and Rain, Pitcher Plant, Sarracenia and Sundews Drosera, another Sheldance star, shows a few plants with exquisite detail.

Filoli Gardens provided the setting for Angels Trumpet, Datura candida, a delicately colored plant with cool details. Fort Worth Botanical Garden provided Johnson with Interwoven Leaves,

Calathea. It's a close up look of three different colors of leaves on the plants.

Life Forms will be displayed at Johnson's studio at the Sanchez Center for the Arts at 1220C Linda Mar Blvd. Creekside Suites 5-7. The gallery hours are Tuesday to Saturday, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. The studio gallery may be reached by phone at 650-355-7507. Johnson said it's best to call first.

Jane Northrop can be reached at jnorthrop@pacificatribune.com