No 'La Bamba,' please

They were riding high on the college radio circuit. Then came "La Bamba." The film was a bit and so was their music. Fine for some bands, but Los Lobos would rather start from scratch and recapture the "coolness" they once had. For more, See Page 3D.

The Observer & Eccentric® Newspapers

he Whitcomb Conservatory:



In the showhouse courtyard, water danc-es merrily from the fountain.

Orchids, cacti and palms give the eyes and nose a workout

By Greg Kowalski staff writer

If trees could talk, what would the giant canary palm in the Belle Iale Conservatory say? That 65-foot tree has spent most of its past 100 years

Conservatory say: That 65-foot free has spent most of its past 100 years in the huge greenhouse. And what would its neighbor, an equally impressive and nearly as tall East Indian palm add? How would their companion, an unusual fish-tall palm, feel?

"Well they don't have to more:

they don't have to worry urricanes here," said Jim

Justus, the conservatory's floricul-

tural supervisor.

The trees are well-fed and watered, and during the winter, can view the dreary snow from the steamy comfort of the glass structure.

steamy comfort of the glass struc-ture.
"Here," Justus sald, "you can go to Florida without going to Florida." For nearly 30 years, Belle Isle, Detroit's "jewel on the river," has glowed with a spectrum of foral col-ors. The 15,000-square-foot Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, ad-Joining Illy pool, 10 acres of gardens

and 20 greenhouses, offer a lush va-ricty of plants, flowers and trees, ranging from common caladiums to exotic cacti.

ranging from common caladiums to exotic each!

Lush, indeed. The conservatory walk takes you through the steamy tropics, past the desert and into a primewal ferre forest. Here, you'll find the strange screw pine from Madagasacr (row the Malagasy Republic), which grows in a winding cortscrew shape. And here are the representative trees from which we get lemons, bananas, coffee and, until synthetics, rubber.

BEYOND ARE the cacti. The room is not for the nervous. Spikes abound. Huge yucea plants grow here. Over there is a strange Saint Jospeh's Coat with large floppy leaves. The owl's eye actus watches with a cluster of spiny white orbs. Other cact thave spines as feathery as gossamer, some present huge thorns. Different varieties of aloe abound.

abound.

And just as you leave the room, look for the gently jellybean plant.

In the fern room, you stand on a small baleony and look into an earlier age of Earth. A steady flow of wa-

ter spiashes across the floor below and gives the room the steamy mugi-ness of a swamp. Straight ahead is an Australian Iter fern — a real tree fern — standing nearly 20 feet tall. All around are different types of ferns, one of the first plants to have appeared on the arth. Exough of the heat. The conserva-fory presents six respecially counter

Enough of the heat. The conserva-tory presents aix especially popular flower shows a year, beginning in January.

The winter show — beld the sec-ond week of January to just before Easter — features cyclemen, cin-craria, calcelorias and primroses.

The Easter show — from Easter to Mother's Day — highlights Easter Illies, tullips, narcissi, genistas, azeleas and rhododendrons.

THE MOTHER'S Day show — the first week of May to the first week of June — shines with widy hydrageas, schizanthus and anapdragons, along with a Mother's Day favorite, Martha Washington geraniums.

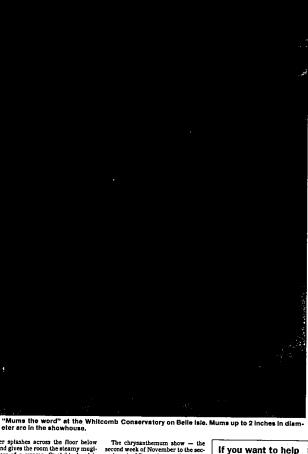
The summer show — June to October — displays several varieties of fuschias, caladiums, coleus and foliage plants.

The chrysanthemum show — the second week of November to the second week of Pocember — glows with every condition of the second week of Pocember — glows with the second week of Pocember 1 and the second week of Santary — the Christmas town from the week before Caristmas to the second week of January — blazes with red, white and pink poinsettias and Jerusalem cherries. Next to the conservatory is the tilpy pool. About 30 feet by 90 feet, the recently refurbished languid pool is surrounded by a rock garden. Also outdoors is the 10-acre formal gardens. The otter permitter of the formal garden area is edged with

the formal garden area is edged with boxwood.

Myriad flowers and a wide swath of grass separate the outer area from the inner sunken gardens. There can be found poppies, daisies, dalphini-um, phlox, narcissi, roses and other flowers.

ACTUALLY, THE outdoor gar-dens don't have anything exception-ally exotic, but they have a lot, enough variety to ensure a glowing pallet of colors.



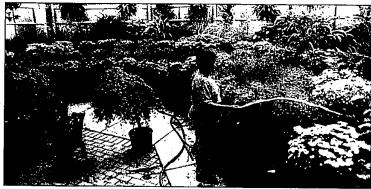
A key element in making the gardens bloom is the Bello iste Botanical Society, This non-profit organization donates funds and does volunteer services, such as conducting tours. Here's how you can get involved:

For \$15 a year (\$25 for a family) you "help to Improve the present gardens, conservatory and greenhouse, help in future garden beautification and to maintain and assist the volunteer program."

You can write to this address for more information; The Belle Isle Botanical P.O. Box 14693 Detroit, Mt. 48214



orticulturist Jim Piper, whose specialty is orchids, clea Poris from the clay pots used in the different floral displays.



snowhouse mums their daily drink of water.