

SUMMARY

In his opener, Ben Wijffelaars reports to have spotted look-a-likes of our editorial board members Ludwig Bercht and Henk Viscaal in a Dutch Railways commercial on TV, waiting on the platform for the train to Paris.

In his series on the 'Verkade' books from the 1930's, Theo Heijnsdijk deals with *Mammillaria vetula* ssp. *gracilis*, one of the most common cacti in cultivation. This popularity is the result of vegetative propagation by means of offsets which detach easily. The species was first described in 1838 as *Mammillaria gracilis* by the German Ludwig Pfeiffer after material that was collected by Carl Ehrenberg in Mexico. In 1923 Britton and Rose changed the name to *Neomammillaria fragilis*. In 1929 Alwin Berger described var. *fragilis* and var. *pulchella*, as varieties of *Mammillaria gracilis*. In 1979 David Hunt lowered the rank of *M. gracilis* to a subspecies of *M. veluta*. The natural habitats can be found in the states of Hidalgo and Queretaro at altitudes between 1200 and 1850 m. Cultivation is easy; in Europe the plants often bloom in winter with small whitish flowers. A form with many short white erect spines is known as 'Arizona snowcap'. In his series 'in the spotlight' Bertus Spee presents photos and short descriptions of *Echinocactus texensis*, *Thelocactus leucacanthus* and its subspecies *schmollii*.

Aat van Uijen brings part 3 of his overview of the *Rhipsalis* species from the Brazilian tropical woods. *R. paradoxa*, *R. pacheco-leonis* and *R. ewaldiana* possess triangular stems composed of segments that seem to be twisted 90 degrees compared to the adjacent stem segments. *R. pentaptera*, with 5-ribbed stems, and *R. mesembryanthemoides* are probably extinct in nature and occur only on trees in parks of Rio de Janeiro. The 3-5 ribbed *R. sulcata* was also thought to be extinct but was rediscovered in nature.

Henk Ruinaard reports about Brother and Dymo label printers. Specifications of types of both printers are listed in tables. For 12 mm labels with 2 text lines the Brother PT-H110 is the cheapest instrument to produce labels suitable for greenhouse plants.

Johan Pot continues the report of his nomenclatural analysis of the genus *Weingartia* (plants formerly placed in *Sulcorebutia*). Based on similarities in a large number of characters, results are given for plants that can be placed in *W. steinbachii*, *W. tarabucoensis* and *W. crispata*,

Hans-Josef Klinkhammer deals with *Opuntia subterranea*. This species was collected in northern Argentina by the botanist R.E. Fries in 1901-1902. A more or less similar plant found by Friedrich Ritter was described in 1962 by Backeberg as *Tephrocactus variiflorus*, but later it became clear that this plant belongs to *O. subterranea*. However, there are some minor differences in color range and size of the flowers.

Henk de Groot experienced some thrilling moments waiting for his flight home at the airport of Gran Canaria, where his just collected plants were discovered in his bag. He fooled the customs officer by showing him a receipt from the store of the local botanic garden, pretending that he had bought the plants there.

Peter van Dongen visited five of the the Cape Verde Islands, a tropical archipelago 500 km from the African Atlantic coast, viz. Sal, Santiago, Fogo, Sao Vicente and Santo Antao. The eastern islands such as Sal are rather arid and bare, whereas the western islands are greener with a more dense vegetation.

Theo Heijnsdijk searched for dragon blood trees (*Dracaena draco*) on the isle of Tenerife. The oldest still living tree (in Icod de los Vinos) is 20 m high with an estimated age of appr. 400 years. As monocots such as *Dracaena* do not exhibit year rings in the wood, age determination is difficult. So, the age is estimated by the combination of tree length, trunk circumference and length of branches up to the first ramification. Other dracos on Tenerife can be found in La Orotava, Puerto de la Cruz and Los Realejos.

Wolter ten Hove summarizes the contents of other journals on succulent plants.

On the back page, Tom Twijnstra honors the species of the genus *Eriocactus* (now named *Erioccephala*) for their toughness and reliability to flower.