

## SUMMARY

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In this first 2019 issue, Ben Wijffelaars defends the reinstatement of old-fashioned membership cards, in reaction to European regulations concerning publicity of personal data.

In his ongoing series on the old 'Verkade' books, Theo Heijnsdijk deals with *Delosperma echinatum*, a species from the Oostkaap region (South Africa) with spined succulent leaves, belonging to the Aizoaceae family. This plant has been known since 1774, when the Englishman Francis Masson sent plants to Kew Gardens. The first picture (a watercolor painting) dates from 1785. In 1788 the plant was first described by J.B. Lamarck as *Mesembryanthemum echinatum*. In 1927 G. Schwantes transferred the plant to the genus *Delosperma*. According to H. Hartmann, the genus *Delosperma* now contains 155 species. In our collections this species can be better cultivated during summertime in a sunny rock garden, rather than in a hot greenhouse.

In his series of articles named 'in the spotlight', Bertus Spee shows us *Ferocactus robustus*, *Oreocereus celsianus*, *Wittia amazonica* and *Mammillaria pondii* ssp. *maritima*. Short descriptions are also given. My contribution covers the blooming of *Matucana huagalensis*. This Peruvian cactus, commonly confused with *M. intertexta*, is very rare in collections and almost extinct in nature. One plant, grown from seeds collected in 2002, flowered for the first time in the collection of Bart Hensel. The flowers (almost white with a robust floral tube), and seeds are different from those of *M. intertexta*, so a taxonomic position at the rank of species is justifiable.

Henk Ruinaard describes his experiences with sowing cacti. He sowed *Echinocereus* seeds in a normal compost/sand mixture with disastrous results: within 4 months all seedlings died, caused by the action of sciara fly larvae. So Henk advises to heat the sowing substrate in advance.

Aat van Uijen draws our attention to *Frerea indica*, a stem succulent native to India, belonging to the Apocynaceae family. Other than the related genus *Caralluma*, it has normal leaves. This plant is endangered in nature (currently only 6 small populations exist) and is doomed to vanish because the natural pollinating insects are no longer there. Projects of artificial propagation are now being carried out in order to save this species.

Sjaak Verbeek provides information on how to kill pests by means of biological control. Nematodes can be used against root louses, predatory mites against red spider mites and predatory bugs against thrips.

Unfortunately, prices are rather high. Further information can be found on the internet.

Kees Jan van Zwienen and Kok van Herk finish off the report of their trip to the cactus areas of Patagonia (southern Argentina and Chile).

Consecutively, they deal with *Pterocactus araucanus*, *P. neuquensis*, *P. australis*, *P. fischeri*, *P. hickenii*, *P. valentini*, *Echinopsis leucantha*, *Denmoza rhodacantha*, *Neoporteria strausiana*, *Opuntia sulphurea*, *Trichocereus candicans* and *T. chiloensis*.

Wolter ten Hoeve outlines what it takes to find a rare cactus in Mexico: all kinds of inconvenience to reach the habitat of *Mammillaria carmenae* on the property of a local farmer called Horacio. Accompanied by 2 German friends, he also found some other nice mammillarias, one of them (*M. aff. rubrograndi*) decorating the cover of this issue.

Triggered by last summer's rainwater deficit, Henk Ruinaard tested the pH of tapwater. In most Dutch regions this turns out to be slightly basic (pH between 7 and 8), so it is better to acidify that water. Rainwater does not have to be acidified. The pH can be determined by use of color strips or special instruments.

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

Finally, Tom Twijnstra encourages sowing, in spite of some recent negative reports.

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