

SUMMARY

Rob Bregman

Ben Wijffelaars leads things off with telling us about cactus quiz questions that can be downloaded from the internet, a presently popular activity at regional meetings of Succulenta members in the province of North Brabant.

The 'horse crippler', *Echinocactus (Homalocephala) texensis* is the subject of Theo Heijnsdijk's series on the plants depicted in the 'Verkade' cactus handbook published in 1931. This plant was first described in 1842 by the German Carl Hopffer as *Echinocactus texensis*. In 1922 L. Britton and J. Rose introduced the generic name *Homalocephala* for this species. In 1978 Franz Buxbaum went back to the original name of *Echinocactus*. Recently (2018), a molecular study confirmed the separate position of *Homalocephala* outside *Echinocactus*. This species is widely distributed in the US/Mexican border zone, and is fortunately not endangered in nature right now. In some cultivated plants the central spines are unusually shaped: they are ramified with one major central branch and two smaller ones on the sides.

Bertus Spee presents another 4 interesting succulents in his series 'in the spotlight'. He provides brief information about *Azureocereus hertlingianus*, *Pachyphytum bracteosum*, *Tunilla soehrensii* and *Pleiospilos bolusii*.

From 2004 on, Henk Ruinaard specialized in the genus *Echinocereus*. He planted several old and frost-resistant plants in terracotta dishes. Due to lack of space in his greenhouse, these plants are cultivated outside under a glass roof all year long.

Frank Süplie describes a new *Epiphyllum* hybrid, *xEpiphyllum* 'Harlekin's Night'. This is the result of crossing *xEpiphyllum* 'Harlekin' and *E. crenatum* ssp. *crenatum* 'Chichicastenango', with the latter serving as pollen donor. A brief English diagnose is included.

A second contribution by Henk Ruinaard deals with zeolite, a silicate-containing mineral substance. Since a few years it is applied as an ingredient of cactus soil mixtures and bims. Its advantage is that water is better retained. Internet sites of producers are also given.

Roelof Salters presents a rather technical article concerning remote climate control in a greenhouse. Temperature and moisture can be monitored and adjusted using a mobile phone or pc. The main conclusion is that nowadays former professional systems are also accessible for hobbyists.

Ludwig Bercht and Henk Viscaal bring the final part of their report on their visit to China. Invited by Mr. Zhou, owner of the Nantong Zhouji Green Expo Garden, Henk and Ludwig gave presentations of their cactus searches in Baja California and Bolivia, respectively.

Henk Ruinaard reacts to a former article by Ben Wijffelaars, who asked the question how to get rid of mealy bugs. Henk refers to the recently published Succulenta user guide, in which a list of legally accepted pesticides can be found.

Henk Viscaal bought a large *Eriocereus jusbertii*, which flowered a year later, showing two 18 cm long white fragrant flowers.

Wolter ten Hoeve summarizes the contents of several other journals on succulent plants. A new book on *Astrophytum* hybrids, written by Roman Pavlica, is reviewed and discussed by Henk Viscaal.

As usual in the December issue, the names of all authors, articles and plant photos published in 2019 are listed alphabetically.

At the back page, Tom Twijnstra noticed a resemblance of the surface of several succulent plants (*Ariocarpus*, *Gasteria* spp.) to the skin of reptiles.

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