

## Summary

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In this last 2023 issue we focus on sowing. This popular element of our hobby is covered by contributions of four authors who describe their methods, everyone with their own 'personal touch'.

But first of all, Ben Wijffelaars tries to promote the genus *Aeonium*, also on facebook. His *A. arboreum* had grown too large to take it out of his greenhouse.

In his series on the 'Verkade' handbooks published in the early 1930s Theo Heijnsdijk discusses *Hamatocactus setispinus*. This well-known cactus was collected for the first time in 1844 at the Colorado River bank in Texas by the German Ferdinand Lindheimer. A year later it was described as *Echinocactus setispinus*. In 1850 Georg Engelmann described 2 varieties: var. *hamatus* and var. *setaceus*. In 1922 the new genus *Hamatocactus* was introduced for this plant by Britton and Rose because of differences in spination, fruit and seed. Later, it was placed in *Ferocactus* (Benson, 1969) and *Thelocactus* (Anderson, 1987). Moreover, some authors created a taxonomic chaos by placing several more or less similar plants in different genera (with new names). A remarkable feature of *H. setispinus* is the presence of nectar glands just above each areole. This is considered to attract ants which protect the plant against small sap sucking animals. Cultivation is easy; flowers often appear all summer long.

Henk Ruinaard examined the effect of Superol (a disinfectant) on the germination of cactus seeds. He used 4 samples of 100 *Echinocereus* hybrids seeds, which were placed on sheets wetted with different concentrations of Superol (50 to 500 mg/l) in water. Germination percentages in 0-150 mg/l Superol were around 60 %, but higher concentrations yielded worse results, with no germination at all in solutions above 500 mg/l. Anyway, Henk's conclusion is that a positive effect of Superol on germination remains doubtful.

Bertus Spee presents part 130 of his series 'In the spotlight'. Four nice succulents (*Aeonium arboreum* var. *atropurpureum*, *Gasteria brevifolia*, *Grusonia invicta* and *Gymnocalycium mihanovichii*) are shown and briefly discussed.

Ruud Tropper outlines his method how to sow cactus seeds. He uses plastic boxes with vermiculite as substrate. In a second contribution, Ruud goes deeper into his method of sowing cacti, with details on sowing seeds of *Sclerocactus*, *Pediocactus* and *Toumeyia*. He prepares these hard seeds by removing the hilar section ('chipping').

Aiko Talens has adopted another method to sow cactus seeds. He uses loam as substrate and sows in April, in his greenhouse, without heating. A list of international seed suppliers is included.

Doan Tran is still trying to find out the most successful method for sowing her mesemb seeds. A 25 % organic substrate and sufficient water gave the best results.

Freddy Delabarre acquired the archives of E.T. Claeys, a Belgian cactus lover and former chairman of a regional section of Succulenta. This included certificates and photos of plant expositions in 1933 and 1935.

Wolter ten Hoeve gives his usual summary of the most important articles in foreign journals on succulent plants, this time 'Kakteen und andere 'Sukkulenten' and 'Cactus World'.

As usual at the end of the year, all plant and author names in the 2023 Succulenta volume are listed alphabetically.

Tom Twijnstra reports about an unknown rhipsalis in his holiday bungalow. The cutting he took was doing well hanging from a tree in his garden.

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