Summary

Rob Bregman

As usual, this issue is opened by columnist Ben Wijffelaars. Since there is not much to write about succulents in this time of year, Ben chose other subjects. For example, he regrets the decline of some of his personal traditions.

In his ongoing series on the 'Verkade' handbooks from the 1930s, Theo Heijnsdijk deals with *Ferocactus hamatacanthus*, a cactus with hooked spines from the Mexico-US boundary region. It was first described in 1846 as *Echinocactus hamatocanthus* (with an 'o') by the German botanist Philip Mühlenpfordt. In 1922 the species was transferred to the genus *Ferocactus* by Britton and Rose. In the past, several varieties have been described, most of them on the basis of spine features. At present, only 2 infraspecific taxa are recognized, viz. subsp. *hamatacanthus* and subsp. *sinuatus.* The main difference are the staminodia (sterile stamens) in the flower of subsp. *sinuatus*. Moreover, emphasis is put on the differences between *F. hamatacanthus* and *Hamatocactus setispinus*, which can be found in flower, fruit and seed. On the IUCN Red List the plant is placed in the category 'least concern'.

Michiel Pillet expresses his concern regarding the chances of survival for cacti in their natural habitats. Climate change is now going so fast that in order to survive, many species don't have enough time to adapt to changing circumstances. The author uses a special technique (SDM, species distribution modeling) to characterize the specific requirements of cactus species. From his survey it was estimated that in 2050 60% of the 408 species studied will not exist anymore. Original plant material in cultivation could be important for setting up programs to prevent species from extinction.

Bertus Spee presents another part of his series 'In the spotlight'. *Ceropegia dichotoma, Lophophora williamsii*, *Oreocereus trollii* and *Pachyphytum hookeri* are briefly discussed.

Petra Romijn discusses caudex plants. A caudex is a thickened, mostly subterranean, often eye-catching basal part of the stem. It is meant for storage of starch and sugars necessary for a quick reaction as soon as the growing season begins. The long and slender shoots are often climbing, using neighboring trees for support. Many species occur in the tropical woods of the southern hemisphere. In cultivation the caudex is mostly planted on top of the substrate so that it remains visible.

After a break of 40 years, Evert de Vreugd restarted his succulent plant hobby. He now has a mixed collection of about 400 plants; his main interest is the genus *Euphorbia*.

Peter Knippels reports about his vacation in Namibia. During his 20 day stay he especially looked for succulents and bulb species. Not only plants, like the famous *Welwitschia mirabilis*, but also animals, such as black rhinos, elephants, giraffes, and sea mammals, were part of his travel plan.

Henk de Groot presents part 2 of his series on natural populations of cacti in Europe. This time he reports about his trip to El Medano, Tenerife, where he found the originally South American *Haageocereus kagenekii* and *Oreocereus pseudofossulatus*.

Nadet Somers visited Wim Backhuys, former president of Succulenta. Apart from succulent plants, he has also an extensive library and a large collection of molluscs, fossils and shells.

Wolter ten Hoeve brings his abstract of the contents of other journals on succulent plants. He gives some details of the most important articles.

Tom Twijnstra apologizes for his misidentification of the plant in his latest contribution. It was not a rhipsalis but *Hoya linearis*.

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