Summary

Rob Bregman

Columnist Ben Wijffelaars was told that worm dung would give very good results as fertilizer for cacti. Ben would like to know how this product is produced in large quantities.

In his series on the 'Verkade' books from the 1930s, Theo Heijnsdijk deals with *Euphorbia caerulescens* (also spelled 'coerulescens'). This cactus-like stem succulent species from South Africa (near Jansenville) was first described in 1827 by Kew Gardens botanist Adrian Haworth. The 4-6 ribbed stems reach 2 m in height and form bushes of 1-3 m across. According to South African botanist Peter Bruyns, E. caerulescens-like plants with rhizomes (horizontal subterranean stems from which shoots develop) should be named *E. radyeri* because in the original description of *E. caerulescens* rhizomes are not mentioned. *E. caerulescens* and *E. radyeri* are not threatened in nature ('least concern' on the IUCN Red List).

In part 136 of his ongoing series Bertus Spee puts 4 nice succulents in the spotlight. This time it is *Browningia candelaris, Oreocereus doelzianus* var. *sericata*, *Pachypodium densiflorum* and *Turbinicarpus alonsoi*.

Nicolas Samyn gives a second report about his trip to the Chilean Atacama desert, one of the driest places on earth. Accompanied by Luc Vandecaveye, he found species of *Copiapoa*, *Eulychnia*, *Echinopsis* (*Trichocereus*), *Miquelopuntia*, *Eriosyce*, *Neoporteria* and *Euphorbia*.

Henk Ruinaard presents the results of his crossing experiments with *Echinocereus* species. In this genus diploid and polyploid cytotypes (with 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 sets of chromosomes) occur. Henk's goal was to find out if/how the ploidy level of hybrids would change, especially in the F1, F2 and F3 generations of triploid hybrids. Surprisingly, one of the 2 triploid F1 hybrids gave 80% germination!

Aat van Uijen pays attention to G.D. Duursma, one of the 'founding fathers' of the Succulenta cactus and succulent society, which was raised in 1919. He was member of the board and chief editor of our journal 'Succulenta'. Furthermore, he wrote a number of books and published many articles. He had a particular interest in epiphytic cacti. At the end of

his life, he donated his plants to the botanic garden of the Utrecht University. That is how Aat came in possession of *Rhipsalis* cuttings from some of Duursma's plants.

Ruud Tropper presents another study on the cold tolerance of cacti. This time he discusses the genus *Pediocactus*, plants from the Arizona-Utah border region. When kept dry from September, all 7 species in Ruud's collection survived temperatures of minus 10 degrees C.

Nadet Somers visited Belgian succulent plant lovers Mieke Geuens and René Goris. René's favorites are *Echinocereus* species, Mieke's hobby is the Crassulaceae family, with the genus *Echeveria* in particular. They have been in Mexico 19 times, during which they witnessed a dramatic decline in natural diversity.

After the death of our chief editor Ludwig Bercht in 2021, most of his plants, his slides and parts of his archive were transferred to the botanic garden in Meise (close to Brussels). This year Andre van Zuijlen and Frans Mommers drove to Meise to see how Ludwig's plants were doing and to discuss the process of scanning the slides. The plants are doing fine but the other work is not finished yet.

Wolter ten Hoeve selected the most interesting articles in recent editions of 'Kakteen und andere Sukkulenten' (German) and 'Kaktusy' (Czech).

On the back cover, Tom Twijnstra already brings us in a Christmas mood with some words about *Schlumbergera truncata* and *S. bridgesii*. Tom is not quite sure which one is the real Christmas cactus.

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