

Summary

The popular name 'prickly pear' for opuntias made Ben Wijffelaars think of the pear tree in his backyard. It was not doing well, but the constant hot air blown by his airco proved to be the cause.

Theo Heijnsdijk presents another part of his ongoing series about the 'Verkade' handbooks from the 1930s. This time he deals with 'the old man cactus' *Cephalocereus senilis*. This well-known plant was first described in 1824 by British botanist Adrian Haworth as *Cactus senilis*, followed by *Cereus senilis* (De Candolle, 1828) and *Cephalocereus senilis* (Pfeiffer, 1838). From the second half of the 19th century on, plants were transported to Europe; a large specimen was shown at the 1889 World Exhibition in Paris. The natural habitat is central Mexico (Hidalgo, Veracruz), at 1130-1850 m altitude. The pale pink-colored small flowers open at night and are pollinated by bats. The 3 cm long red fruits are eaten by birds, who disperse the shiny black seeds. On the IUCN Red List *C. senilis* is placed in the category 'endangered', predominantly caused by illegal collection. In European collections the plants seldom flower.

Bertus Spee brings part 141 of his series 'In the spotlight', with another four nice succulents: *Dorstenia barnimiana*, *Gymnocalycium anisitsii*, *Lobivia* (*Echinopsis*) *famatinensis* and *Obregonia denegrii*.

Ruud Tropper reports about cultivars in the genus *Schlumbergera*. Here, he deals with purely white-flowered ('albino') *S. truncata* forms, with the most popular form called 'White Flamenco', created in Japan and Brazil. Ruud's many attempts to mutually pollinate these albino forms failed, so he first crossed an albino form with the magenta-flowering *S. orssichiana*, and then backcrossed the F1 with an albino form. This work yielded some new albino hybrids. Up till now, Ruud's efforts to cross two of these new albino forms were not successful. Some other recently grown cultivars are 'Perfect date' (albino), 'Chiba Spot' (red) and 'Comet' (pink).

Petra Romijn began her caudex plant hobby with *Jatropha podagrica*, a tropical species from the Euphorbiaceae family. *J. podagrica* is native to many tropical countries, and is commercially propagated and widely available. The umbrella-like inflorescence consists of one or more female flowers in the middle, surrounded by a number of male flowers.

Nicolas Samyn continues his reports on his trip to the Atacama desert, in northern Chile. Accompanied by Luc Vandecaveye, he tells us about the plants he came across, such as *Eriosyce krausii*, *Eulychnia breviflora*, *Copiapoa calderana*, *C. cinerascens*, *C. serpentisulcata* and *Euphorbia lactiflora*.

Aiko Talens finds his hobby in cultivating so-called 'winteractive succulents', plants from the southern hemisphere that grow and flower during the north-European wintertime. Most of these species are native to South Africa. Inside his greenhouse, Aiko built 'mini greenhouses' for plants with special requirements as to temperature and light. Most plants are watered in the beginning (September) and end (February till April) of their growing season. His collection consists for the greater part of mesembs and bulb species.

Nadet Somers visited René and Gertie Schengenga, a couple in southern Limburg, both plant and garden lovers.

Andre van Zuijlen reports about reactions from readers to his article 'A special place', published in the latest *Succulenta* issue. Some plant names could be wrong; Herman Vertongen and Paul Neut suggested correct names.

Wolter ten Hoeve gives a survey of the contents of foreign journals on succulent plants.

Tom Twijnstra likes to improve his knowledge on the plants he cultivates by reading books. His caudex plants loving friend, on the other hand, does not care about finding additional information, but he loves his plants just as much as Tom does.