Summary

Rob Bregman

Columnist Ben Wijffelaars leads it off with a rather philosophic report about his mid-summer thoughts, just by looking at his cacti.

Theo Heijnsdijk continues his series on the 'Verkade' handbooks from the 1930s with *Stapelia grandiflora*. This species was found by the Scottish explorer Francis Masson in the late 18th century during an expedition to South Africa. Today, a large group of S*tapelia* species is considered a collection of hybrids, with many unstable characteristics in each 'species'. In 2012, the South African botanist Peter Bruyns suggested that the genus *Stapelia* should be incorporated in the genus *Ceropegia*. Stapelia flowers produce a smell of rotting meat which attracts carrion-flies. The fruit is a double follicle, consisting of two oblong carpels. The seeds carry a bunch of silky hairs which favor dispersal by wind. The natural habitats are found in the summer rain area of the Large and Small Karoo. Stapelias can be easily propagated by cuttings. A main threat are mealy bugs hiding just below the surface of the compost.

Annemieke van Ling presents part 1 of her new series on the genus *Haworthia*, leaf succulents from Southern Africa. These plants prefer shady conditions. She communicates frequently with other Haworthia lovers on Facebook.

Bertus Spee brings part 146 of his ongoing series 'In the spotlight'. This time *Dactylopsis digitata*, *Euphorbia susannae*, *Euphorbia caerulescens* and *Tylecodon paniculatus* are discussed and depicted.

Wolter ten Hoeve deals with *Aloe polyphylla*, a species with remarkably spirally arranged leaves. Wolter describes the special requirements for successful sowing. In the Netherlands these plants can be cultivated outdoors all year long, even without protection in winter.

Aiko Talens acquired three specimens of *Resnova megaphylla*, a bulb species of the Hyacinthaceae family, with two succulent leaves lying flat on the soil. Other than most South African bulbs, this species grows and flowers in the (European) summer.

Henk Ruinaard presents the results of his study on functional dioecy in the genus *Echinocereus*. This is a feature of many plants to prevent self-pollination, and so the danger of inbreeding. It can be observed in basically bisexual flowers in which maturation of the female (stigma lobes) and male (anthers) organs are separated in time and/or space. In the section Triglochidiati Henk could confirm the results published by other authors; he also found male and female flowers. Functional dioecy occurs relatively often in hybrids. The only disadvantage of dioecy is that it reduces the number of seeds by 50% as compared to what a triploid population can produce.

Aiko Talens likes the genus *Gymnocalycium*. One of his favorite species is *G. vatteri*, with its variety *unguispinum* in particular. Aiko outlines the variability among plants of this species. There is variation between separate populations and even plants obtained from our former editor and *Gymnocalycium* specialst Ludwig Bercht are beginning to look different.

Aat van Uijen presents part 4 of his series entitled 'Gallery epiphyte'. This time *Pfeiffera miyagawae* is described and depicted. This species was found in 1974 in central Bolivia. Seemingly, plants of only two clones are in cultivation, so seeds can only be obtained if you have plants of both clones.

Wolter ten Hoeve gives an abstract of the contents of other journals on succulent plants.

25 years ago, Tom Twijnstra was impressed by photos of the majestic Puya plants in the Peruvian Andes, so he wanted to have such plants of his own. After sowing, the seedlings did not develop as expected.