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The Cactus Family



Synopsis

Only now, at the beginning of the new millennium, is there an up-to-date, comprehensive study of the cactus family. This long-awaited, monumental work covers the Cactaceae in an encyclopedic manner, addressing 125 genera and 1810 species. The most comprehensive single resource on the subject available today, it includes more than 1000 color photographs in addition to other illustrations. The introduction to each genus concentrates on the discovery of the cacti, and the improvements in our understanding of them, many of which result from relatively recent investigation. As stated in the foreword, "Cacti have a special fascination all their own. Miniature spiny dwarf cacti less than an inch in diameter are hidden in the arid regions of North and South America; the majestic columns of the giant saguaro, *Carnegiea gigantea*, dominate the deserts of Arizona. Yet all these cacti, given time, offer the surprising paradox of brilliant flowers, their delicacy a striking contrast to the strong spines that keep the viewer at a respectful distance." This remarkable diversity is fully described and illustrated in this authoritative encyclopedia, which is both scientifically accurate and readable. It also includes a chapter by Roger Brown on the cultivation of cacti, making the book even more useful to growers and hobbyists, as well as to taxonomists, ethnobotanists, and conservationists---indeed, anyone interested in succulent plants.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The strange spiny spectacle of cactus plants comes under close and expert scrutiny in this study of great breadth and fascinating detail. Amateur growers and scholars alike will be able to delve into

Anderson's treatise and come away with increased understanding of the nearly two thousand species comprising an extraordinary family of New World succulents. On a practical level, Anderson is an eminently inviting writer who delivers intriguing descriptions of the characteristics that set these plants apart. He also presents brief but brilliant surveys of ethnobotany and conservation issues. While more than 1,000 photographs overall illustrate the extraordinary diversity and beautiful flowers of cacti, the main section--an alphabetically arranged reference--will arguably rank as the definitive work readers will use to examine and identify cactus genera, species, and subspecies. Alice Joyce

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BUY THIS BOOK! Buy it now. . . . It is by far the best cactus book now in print. -- Myron Kimnach, Cactus & Succulent Society of America Journal, March/April 2001 Everything you ever wanted to know about any kind of cactus . . . The saguaro of books. -- Michael Clancy, The Arizona Republic, April 18, 2001 I believe that this book is a monumental accomplishment and that there is nothing else like it. -- Richard Stone, The Horticultural Society of New York Library It will long be valued as a source book... [Anderson] has left us a monument that merits high praise. -- Gordon Rowley, The Garden, September 2001 This book is a monumental accomplishment. -- Choice, July 2001 [The photographs] are superb and will entice many avid collectors. -- David Salzman, The American Gardener, September 2001 [This book] . . . should reside on the shelf of every serious cactus enthusiast. -- Arthur C. Gobson, The Quarterly Review of Biology, Volume 77, No. 1, March 2002

The book covers many aspect of cacti such as biology, anatomy, agronomy and more. Very descriptive and colorful.

If you want a book that shows more than pictures of cactus then this is the book. It cover enough scientific information to give you enough background information on cactus and follows up with general groups of cactus with pictures to help you understand the diverse range of size and shape that cactus can achieve. Well worth buying and using as a main reference source.

I moved to Arizona a few years ago and growing cacti and succulents is just about the most natural thing to do here. I got this book and it has been a great resource for me in terms of knowledge about cacti and of course the detailed descriptions of all the species. I especially like the deconvolution of the different latin names which in many other books are quite a jumble and sometimes can be very confusing when looking something up or trying to compare between books. However, I do have to

say that this book has one major flaw that stops it from being 5 stars: not all descriptions come with a photograph, so this book is great when you know the name of the cactus you are looking up, but if you know generally what you have but not the specifics, you can easily get stuck as the descriptions are not always enough to make the distinction.

This book provides a modern and complete overview of the family and gives a lot of information about biology, ecology and the way to use and to cultivate cactus. No need anymore of smaller cactus guides which were accumulating on the shelves!

Great comprehensive book. This will now be my go to reference.

Great book glad I got this book!

An excellent, up to date book on Cactus. A worthy addition to the reference library of any serious cactus collector. Not a book for someone just looking for "growing instructions" but more geared to the serious botanist.

There is not much to say other than this is a great book. It is very informative and covers many aspects of cacti. It was also delivered in a timely manner.

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