

## 10 Succulents (& Cacti) to get to know

Compiled & written by Stephen McCabe & Linda McNally  
This edition, with photos, last edited August, 2019

Common Name: **Golden Barrel Cactus**  
Scientific Name: **Echinocactus grusonii**  
Family: **Cactaceae**

Description: The Cactaceae family consists of about 175 genera and about 2000 species of flowering plants. Most are adapted to arid environments, although a few do inhabit tropical or subtropical areas. The Echinocactus grusonii is endemic to east/ central Mexico. It is slow growing to 4' tall and 2 ½' in diameter. It flowers mid to late spring with yellow flowers.



Common Name: **Fan Aloe**  
Scientific Name: **Kumara plicatilis, formerly Aloe plicatilis**  
Family: **Asphodelaceae**

Description: The fan aloe is endemic to a few mountains in the Fynbos ecoregion of the Western Cape in South Africa. It is one of two species in the genus Kumara, with the other being Kumara haemanthifolia. It may grow as a small tree or a multi stemmed shrub. The racemes are cylindrical shape and always single, unbranched with a flower color of red. Hardy 20 to 25 degrees.



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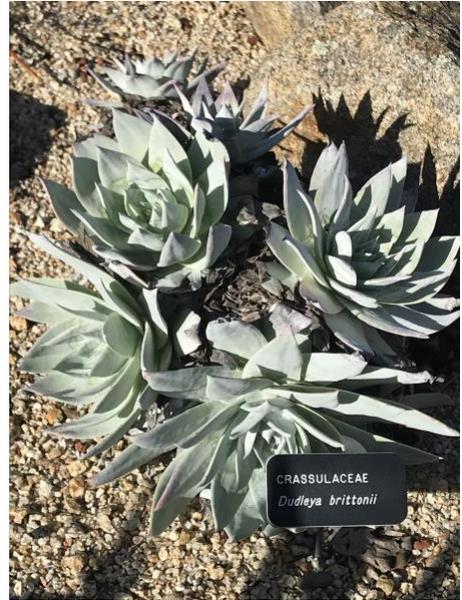
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Common Name: **Giant Chalk Dudleya**

Scientific Name: **Dudleya brittonii**

Family: **Crassulaceae**

Description: Dudleya is native to Baja California, Mexico. It is hardy 15 to 20 degrees and is a winter grower. The genus was named for William R. Dudley (1849-1911), who was a botanist at Stanford University. The Giant Chalk Dudley develops into a 1 1/2 foot wide rosette with fleshy chalk covered leaves. Flowers are yellow on long stalks in late spring and early summer. This plant does well in containers and rock gardens.



Common Name: **Ponytail Palm or Bottle Palm**

Scientific Name: **Beaucarnea recurvata**

Family: **Asparagaceae**

Description: The Beaucarnea recurvata is native to eastern Mexico. It can be grown as a houseplant or in the garden. Outside it can reach up to 30 feet tall with a swollen trunk the base. Leaves up to 3' long form clumps at the ends of the branches and droop down. Mature plants flower occasionally in late spring or summer. The flowers are small and cream-colored on a pyramidal shaped inflorescence up to 2' tall. Hardy 25 to 30 degrees.



Common Name: **Crown Of Thorns**

Scientific Name: **Euphorbia milii**

Family: **Euphorbiaceae**

Description: Euphorbia is a very large and diverse genus of flowering plants commonly called spurge, which is found around the world. They contain a white milky sap that is toxic and one needs to take care when working with these plants being sure to wear gloves and protect eyes. The individual flowers are either male or female with the male flowers, reduced to only the stamen and the females to the pistil. The Euphorbia milii is native to Madagascar.



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Common Name: **Blue Chalksticks**

Scientific Name: **Senecio serpens**

Family: **Asteraceae**

**Description:** Senecios are prized for their unique foliage which can resemble pearls, chalk sticks, and even bananas. There are many different forms including low growing ground cover types and trailing cascades great for hanging baskets. *Senecio serpens* is a dwarf shrub indigenous to southern Africa. They are very heat and drought tolerant, less cold tolerant. Green varieties thrive indoors.

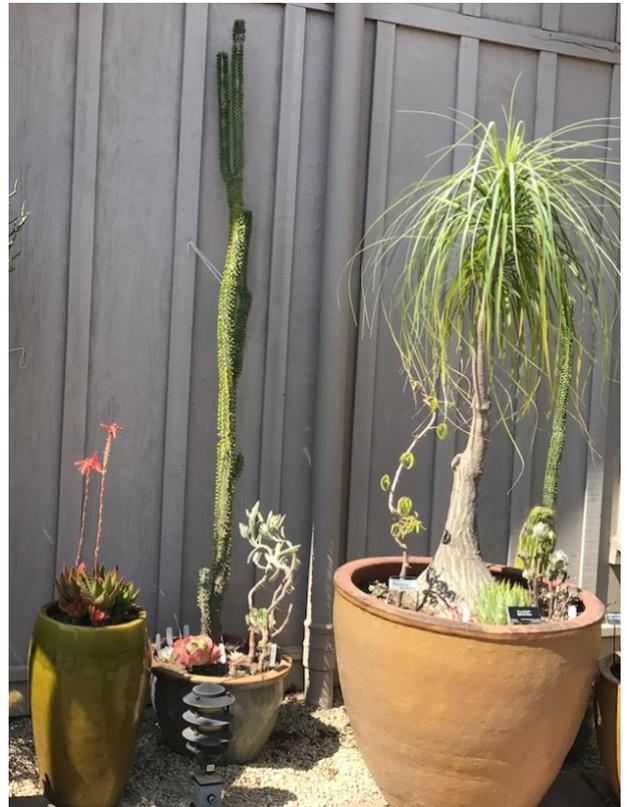


Common Name: **Madagascar Ocotillo**

Scientific Name: **Alluaudia procera**

Family: **Didiereaceae**

**Description:** The *Alluaudia procera* is a deciduous succulent and endemic to southern Madagascar. It can grow 10 to 25 feet tall and 4 to 6 feet wide. It has ½ inch rounded succulent leaves and grey spines. In cultivation, these plants can, but rarely do flower with tiny male or female greenish-yellow flowers in open thyrses at the tips of the branches. Plant in full sun, in well draining soil and water only when plants are in leaf. It is advisable to keep plants in smaller pots to keep soils from being over saturated, especially in winter, when it is leafless and weather is cooler. Can take temperatures down to 25 degrees.



(tall, skinny plant in the middle of picture)

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Common Name: **Window Plant**

Scientific Name: **Haworthia cuspidata**

Family: **Asphodelaceae**

Description: These plants can be above ground or can have roots that pull them flush with the ground or slightly under a low layer of gravel. The plants have translucent upper surfaces that allow light to travel through the inside of the leaves to chloroplasts lower down. Photosynthesis can take place underground as the light travels through the “windows” to the lower parts of the leaves. Endemic to southern Africa.



Common Name: **Stone Plants**

Scientific Name: **Conophytum, Lithops, Pleiospilos**

Family: **Aizoaceae**

Description: These plants come from very dry areas of southern Africa and Namibia. The areas where they grow are so lacking in water and have been for so long that these water containing plants have evolved to look like the rocks in the areas in which they grow. The Pleiospilos are often called split rocks. The flowers only bloom on warm, sunny afternoons, corresponding to when the pollinators are active. Smell them: cocoa butter. The fruits open and close depending on the humidity.



Common Name: **Century Plant**

Scientific Name: **Agave**

Family: **Agavaceae**

Description: Century plants have bloomed in as little as seven years, at the Arboretum. Some will take as many as 20 or more years to bloom. Tequila is made from a couple of kinds of agaves, A. tequilana called blue agave is one. We have a number of species of Agave in the garden, including A. shawii shawii. The fibers of the Agave have been used to make rope and the needles have been used for pens, nails, and needles for sewing.

