Coryphantha echinus

A nice plant for any greenhouse, Coryphantha echinus dresses itself up in a dense layer of spines, lending the name echinus, meaning like a hedgehog. Texas Hedgehog Cactus would make a good common name. The plant is a small plant even in old age, attaining 5–6 cm in diameter and maybe 10 cm in height, or a bit smaller in habitat. The plant will offset, however, making a small clump that usually only needs a 12–15 cm pot. The heads are egg shaped for many years, eventually becoming short cylindrical. They retain a “juvenile” pectinate spine formation for some years, and this has lent other names to this species over time, including Mammillaria pectinata, Coryphantha pectinata and Cactus pectinatus. Eventually plants will grow projecting central spines, but this does not necessarily mark the onset of adulthood; flowering can occur years before the centrals appear.

Like most coryphanthas the plants start putting out their 6 cm flowers about mid summer and continue into the fall. Winter presents no problems, as the plants take temperatures to at least 20°F and might probably fare well, kept dry, to 10°F.