In the recent Journal special on eastern Brazil (81-3, May–June 2009), Martin and James report that older plants of *Uebelmannia pectinifera* observed in the wilds of Brazil “often develop a strange three-angled pattern of areoles or crests at the apex when old.” This observation resonated with me, as I have recently experienced an outbreak in my collection of plants similarly affected, except that my plants were of another genus, and rather young.

Little seems to be known of this deformity, so I am reporting my experience in hope that some definitive diagnosis might turn up. Gordon Rowley, in his recent book *Teratopia* (2006), show an affected plant with the caption “*Epithelantha micromeris* trifid apex. Such di- and trichotomies are stable and rarely go on to become fully fasciated.” Interestingly, his choice of terminology, “trifid,” was the same that I had settled on, though he uses the word as an adjective, whereas I think it serves nicely as a noun, too. But is this a nor-

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**LEFT** *Sulcorebutia tiraquensis electracantha* shows a trifid deformation of the apex and weak spination. Offsets lower down on the same plant have normal growing points. **RIGHT TOP** A specimen of *Sulcorebutia heinzii* formed a trifid apex in 2009. The spination is normal, but flowering has been sparse. I have assumed this deformation to be communicable, perhaps viral, and have taken precautions against it, destroying affected plants and using insecticide spray. **RIGHT BOTTOM** This *Sulcorebutia crispata* has an elongated apex. This is a normal variation in growth and will almost certainly revert to normal within a few months.