The Baja California peninsula is known for a high rate of endemism in the family Cactaceae, with an estimated 72 endemic species, or about 70% of the cacti known from the peninsula (Rebman and Roberts 2012). The islands of Baja California, whether in the Sea of Cortez or off the Pacific coast, are especially rich with cactus endemics. But the Pacific coastal region of the peninsula, with at least 3 distinct phytogeographic zones from the US border to the Vizcaino, is also known for occurrences of unique forms of cacti with highly restricted distributions (Reimann and Ezcurra 2007). Recent regional studies of plant diversity on the peninsula and comparative floras between peninsular regions as well as between the peninsula and its islands have expanded understanding of the phytogeography of Baja (Ratay et al 2014, Prado et al 2010, Vanderplank and Mata 2010, Reimann and Ezcurra 2007, etc). However, the taxonomic, systematic, genetic, morphological and biogeographical relationships between more widespread taxa and their putative endemic relatives with highly restricted distributions are not well studied in detail.

For example, the endemic cacti of Isla Cedros suggest close relationships with

1. Two specimens of Ferocactus chrysacanthus on Isla Cedros, showing the red and yellow spined forms.

2. Ferocactus gracilis subsp. coloratus on the peninsula, near Santa Rosalillita.