

## **Bradleya**

Author: Glavich, Tom

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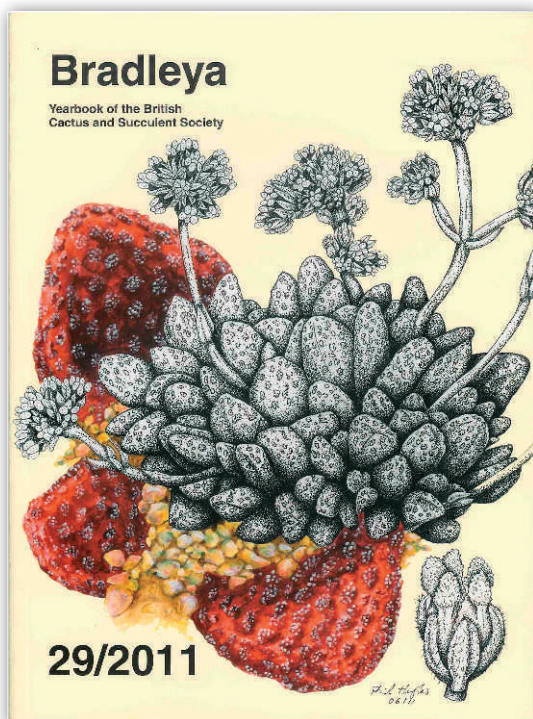
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**Bradleya 29/2011** Published by the British Cactus and Succulent Society, Edited by Colin C. Walker. 184 pp. ISBN 978-0-902099-84-5



This is fascinating volume in the series, covering a range of plants from the *Drosanthemum* (with detailed studies of several new species and the description of a new species, recent work on *Aloes* in both South Africa and Kenya, new species of *Aloes*, *Crassula*, *Esterhuysenia*, *Pilosocereus* and several others. Naturalization and use of non-native species in South Africa focuses on *Agave* as well as *Cactus*.

Although a book shouldn't be judged by its cover, the splendid botanical rendering by Phil Hughes of the new species, *Crassula fragarioides* puts this to lie. It is a great introduction to a set of interesting and informative articles that span the breadth of succulent interests. A description of a few of the highlights follows, however every article in the volume is well worth reading.

Following the cover illustration to the text it illustrates brings the reader to an article on the new species by Ernst J. van Jaarsveld, Nick Helme and Derek Tribble. The excellent article on the species covers the unique geology of the site as well as a formal description and cultivation

information. The species is confined to the sandstone outcrops of the Bokkeveld escarpment in the Northern Cape. This escarpment forms an abrupt transition between succulent and geophytic plant habitats, with a large number of endemic species.

The genus *Cyphostemma* in Angola is well covered by Filipe de Sousa, Estrela Figueiredo and Gideon F. Smith in an article that briefly describes the 22 known species with data on original publication, a one line horticultural description, and location maps of described species. It's a great primer for the adventurous traveler.

The *Aizoaceae*philes will find several interesting articles in this volume, with a new species of *Esterhuysenia grabameckii* described by Ernst J. van Jaarsveld, and a detailed study in variability of *Conophytum reconditum* and *Conophytum buysianum*, which grow together and separately near Kliprand South Africa. An exploration into the identity of *Drosanthemum micans* by H.E.K. Hartmann is accompanied by a detailed article on *Drosanthemum* subgenus *Speciosa* (*Aizoaceae*): towards a revision of the plants with black staminodes by H.E.K. Hartmann and A. Le Roux. These infrequently cultivated, but spectacularly flowered members of the shrubby mesembs receive a thorough review including geological preferences. A new species, *Drosanthemum uniondalense* is also described.

There are four cactus articles in this volume, one on the Diversity and distribution of *Cactaceae* in Ceará state, north-eastern Brazil, by Marcelo O.T. Menezes et al. This is a state not well known for its cactus population, but which has several impressive species in quantity, and several threatened by development. Daniela Zappi and Nigel Taylor describe a new species of *Pilosocereus* subgenus *Gounellea*, *P. frewenii* from SE Brazil. The accompanying photographs clearly show this species is a beautiful addition to the genus. The habitat includes several new succulents, one of which, *Encholirium agavoides* is illustrated.

The other two articles are on *Cacti* in South Africa. Gideon Smith et al discuss *Opuntia microdasys* which is becoming invasive, frequently released as an unwanted cultivated plant. Barbara K. Mashope et al. describe the relations between the surprisingly large number of cactus pear cultivars farmed in South Africa. A cladistic diagram traces the relations and heritage of many of these



back to Luther Burbank and natural populations in Mexico.

The Aloes are covered in several articles. Len Newton describes two new species from Kenya. Gideon F. Smith and Estrela Figueiredo describe the provenance and illustrate *Aloe mendesii* an apparently uncultivated and rarely seen cliff dwelling species from Angola. Neil Crouch and Gideon F. Smith elevate *Aloe cooperi* subsp. *pulchra* to *Aloe sharoniae* based on distinct morphological features of both species.

For a journal of such breadth, major contributions are made by remarkably few authors. There

are 7 articles authored or contributed to by Gideon F. Smith and Estrela Figueiredo, in various orders and with and without co-authors. Nonetheless, this is an excellent addition to the series of yearbooks, and many fruitful hours can be spent exploring the detailed studies and excellent photographs that illustrate all of the articles. The technical nature of the articles is what one would expect in a yearbook, a step or two above the more popular journals, but almost everything is readily understood. The writing is always clear, and the yearbook has clearly been carefully edited. This is an excellent addition to any succulent library. 🌵

## An Aloe Oddity Tim Harvey

Aloes usually produce perfect flowers, i.e. possessing both male and female parts. A close look at the accompanying images reveals that several flowers on this *Aloe alooides* are not producing nectar. Normally visible as a brownish fluid in the center of the flower, it is clearly absent from several. Further investigation, achieved through sectioning an individual flower (inset) reveals that they possess no female parts at all – style or ovary. So far, this has only been noticed on this specimen, which appears totally normal in all other respects. 🌵

