

Succulents and Cacti

Succulents are plants whose cells and tissues are specialized for the storage of water. Most succulents are native to regions that are arid or semi-arid for at least a portion of the year, where the ability to store water is essential for their survival. However, some succulents grow in temperate regions, and a few succulents are native to regions where temperatures fall below 0°F.

Like ferns, succulent plants can occur in a number of Families, but the most well known Family of succulents is the Cactus Family (Cactaceae). All cacti are "succulents", but not all succulents are cacti.

General Characteristics of all Succulents

Specific Characteristics of Cacti

Among other characteristics, the stems of cacti are made up of small "cushions" or "compacted lateral branches" with pores (**areoles**), which give rise to leaves (if any), spines, barbs and flowers. **IF PLANT HAS NO AREOLES, IT IS NOT A CACTUS!**

Unusual Cacti:

*Pereskias

The most primitive of cacti, this genus is comprised of about 20 species, all having traditional leaves and woody stems. Like all cacti, they have areoles, from which spines and flowers emerge.

*Opuntias - "Prickly Pear" or "Beaver Tail" Cactus

Genus is most widely distributed in terms of geography. In some areas, it is grown for its edible fruit.

*Rainforest Cacti

Group comprises several genera of epiphytic jungle cacti, most of which are native to Mexico and South America. Most well known ones often referred to as *Christmas, *Thanksgiving or ***Holiday Cactus**.

General Cultural of Succulents/Cacti

Media -

Light -

- Natural

- Artificial

Temperature -

Watering -

Fertilization

Propagation Techniques

- Sexual -

- Asexual

Leaf cuttings - Jade Plant, Ghost Plant, Panda Plant

Stem cuttings and offsets - allow cuttings and offsets to air dry (callus)

Plantlet separation - leaf margins of some Kalanchoes.